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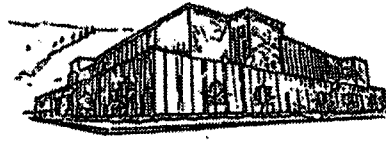
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**WEB-BASED LEARNING AMONG RARE PRIDE
CONSERVATION EDUCATION CAMPAIGN MANAGERS**

by

Ashley Jeanne Parkinson

B.A. Anthropology, University of California Berkeley, Berkeley, CA, 1995

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Science

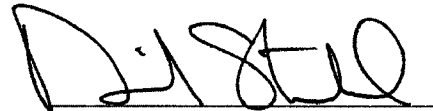
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Web-based Learning Among Rare Pride Conservation Education Campaign Managers

Chairperson: Dr. Neva Hassanein 

According to a variety of theories on education, people learn, not via the acquisition of knowledge, but through knowledge construction. At the same time, research has shown that computer-mediated environments have the potential to enhance learning processes. This thesis research focuses on the intersection between constructivist learning theory and CMC (computer-mediated communication), as seen through the lens of an Internet Club created by the international non-profit conservation organization, Rare.

The Rare Pride Internet Club provides its members with a tool for communication, a supportive network of people, and a space for managing information. Most importantly, this research illustrates the potential for CMC to enhance learning within the field of conservation education, as Club members are learning practical skills and sharing valuable information, experiences, ideas, and advice. Club members are not, however, very involved in substantive dialogue about formal assignments or academic topics related to conservation education. There is evidence of important constructivist learning processes on the Club including social interaction, reflection, the introduction of multiple-perspectives, peer learning, and the role of teacher as facilitator.

Rare faces challenges in creating a more successful learning environment, including a “culture of positivity,” technical problems, and lack of time and participation. Recommendations for how Rare might improve the Club to increase the potential for learning are provided.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I could not have completed this thesis without the help of many people. The three members of my committee, Dr. Neva Hassanein, Dr. Jill Belsky, and Dr. Robin Saha, have shared with me their time and opinions, which have been invaluable to this project. In particular, Dr. Hassanein, my committee chair, has been a true mentor and a source of great help to me over the years that I have been in graduate school. She has challenged and supported me with patience, warmth, and unending enthusiasm.

The students, faculty, and staff of the Environmental Studies Department at the University of Montana nourished me with their ideas and inspired me with their commitment to environmental conservation.

My family has supported me from afar, and I credit my interest in conservation in part to early childhood hiking and camping adventures in the deserts of Arizona.

Jason Lathrop, my friend and husband-to-be, provided me with endless entertainment while I was cooped up in my office and generously shared with me his writing and technology expertise, both of which have improved this document immensely. Thank you--I could have never finished this project without your love and support.

Finally, this thesis would not have been possible without the participation of Rare and all of the Pride program study participants, including Megan Hill, Rosemary Godfrey, Paul Butler, Daniela Lerda Klohck, Ian Bride, Bob Smith and all of the Rare Pride campaign managers, past and present. I tried to accurately represent Rare, the Club, and all participants' views accurately—any mistakes or inaccurate interpretations are entirely my own.

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CHAPTER ONE

A RARE CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

Introduction

July 22, 2005: “Happy birthday, may you enjoy this day and may God bless you with many more. Good luck with your work and congratulations on the wonderful results you have achieved during your career.”

August 4, 2005: “Thanks all, its mean a lot for me, nice to have a big family such as Pride campaigners.”

Separately, constructivist learning theory and computer-mediated technologies are furthering the reach of education. This master’s thesis explores how these two modern phenomena can sometimes work together to support successful learning environments, in this case not in a formal classroom setting, but on an active Internet Club. The Club, represented by the two messages quoted above, belongs to a unique non-profit organization called “Rare,” which aims to “protect our planet’s natural heritage—while helping people benefit from conservation” (Rare 2006). An in-depth examination of the Rare Pride Internet Club shows that there is potential for computer-mediated communication (CMC) to enhance leaning among a select group of conservation education professionals, a finding that is important, not just for Rare, but for the broader fields of conservation and education.

This document is organized into five chapters: Chapter One provides background information and context for this research project. Chapter Two is a review of relevant literature on learning and computer-mediated communication, in connection with conservation education. Chapter Three states the central research question and objectives,

and describes the study design and methodology. Chapter Four presents the research findings. Finally, Chapter Five discusses and synthesizes the findings, and presents conclusions and recommendations.

Background information

In the summer of 2004, I worked for ten weeks as an intern for an international environmental non-profit organization named Rare, formerly known as the Rare Center for Tropical Conservation, based in Arlington, Virginia. Rare's mission, "to protect wildlands of globally significant biodiversity by enabling local people to benefit from their preservation" (Rare 2006), is not uncommon in the modern environmental movement, but the organization's programs, methods, and culture are unique.

It is not the aim of this research to compare and contrast different approaches to international conservation, nor is this thesis attempting to evaluate the effectiveness of any of the conservation organizations and programs mentioned in this document. This study is focused on examining web-based learning among a select group of conservation professionals who are part of a specific Rare program called "Pride," in an effort to answer the question, "What is the potential for computer-mediated communication to enhance learning in conservation education?" Therefore, background information provided in this chapter about Rare (the organization, its programs, and the reasons why I chose to do this project) is simply meant to help the reader understand the context and purpose of my research.

Like the various species they seek to protect, conservation groups carve out special niches and use a mixture of tactics to accomplish their objectives. These can include, for example, the identification of priority conservation areas (i.e., Conservation

International's "biodiversity hotspots," or World Wildlife Fund's "ecoregions"), affecting legislation and conservation policy (Environmental Defense, for example), or "expos[ing] environmental criminals and...challeng[ing] government and corporations when they fail to live up to their mandate to safeguard our environment and our future," (Greenpeace 2006). In the past few decades, while many conservation groups have prioritized scientific assessment, land acquisition, direct action, or litigation, Rare has concentrated its efforts on training and supporting conservationist-minded people around the world, on whom the organization relies to motivate others to act on behalf of the environment. On their Web site, Rare claims to "Inspire conservation...by turning average citizens into life-long advocates for the environment...by giving communities a voice in conserving their natural resources...and by helping individuals better their lives through more sustainable livelihoods" (Rare 2006).

These days, terms such as "community-based conservation," are bandied about with increasing regularity as environmental groups strive to incorporate a variety of stakeholder perspectives into their conservation strategies. Rare's focus on constituency-building is an example of this trend, and the organization's approach is becoming more popular as conservationists look for ways to build grassroots support and "develop models for conservation that are practical, replicable, and that allow local people to benefit from their sustained implementation" (Rare 2006).

At the end of my internship, I decided to continue my working relationship with Rare by taking on a research project focused on the organization's conservation education program called Rare Pride, which purports to "equip grassroots conservationists with the training and assistance to dramatically increase public support for conservation and to generate immediate results for threatened species and ecosystems" (Rare 2006). In

particular, I decided to examine an Internet club used by Rare to communicate with and support dozens of Rare Pride staff scattered throughout the world. I was interested in how and what conservation professionals can learn from one another through communication via the World Wide Web.

Protecting rare species with Rare programs

Rare has been in existence for over thirty years. In that time its three distinct programs, Rare Radio, Rare Enterprises, and Rare Pride, have become known in the international conservation community for their use of non-traditional approaches to changing the attitudes and behavior of citizens in select communities around the world toward the environment. Rare trains and supports people (from entrepreneurs to conservation-minded citizens to environmental professionals), in areas that Rare has identified as “some of the world’s most important sites for biological diversity” (Rare 2006). These people carry out conservation objectives, as described by the organization:

[Rare puts] conservation tools in the hands of those able to influence lasting change—local community members. Rare provides training, support, and resources to hundreds of local conservationists every year, who then inspire conservation among thousands of residents, decision-makers, and visitors in their communities. This amplifying effect is the foundation of Rare’s approach (Rare 2004:4).

At the time of this study, Pride was working in Aceh Jaya (Indonesia), Bateka Plateau (Gabon), Oxampampa (Peru), and Pohpei (Federated States of Micronesia), among many places.

Although my research is focused solely on Rare’s Pride Program, some background information on all three programs is helpful in understanding the organization as a whole.

With a budget of almost \$4 million and a staff of thirty people based in nine countries around the world, Rare seems more like a corporation than the typical struggling environmental non-profits with which I am used to being involved. In 2004, Rare implemented projects in twenty-six countries around the world that host much of the earth's biodiversity, including Mexico, Nicaragua, Indonesia, China, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Grenada, and Palau (Rare 2004).

Rare's efforts have resulted in partnerships with conservation giants like The Nature Conservancy and Conservation International (CI), as well as institutional support from organizations and foundations such as the United Nations Foundation, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, Aveda Corporation, and Patagonia, Inc. In 2005, Rare was one of twenty-five organizations to receive Fast Company magazine's "Social Capitalist" award, which recognizes groups that use "the disciplines of the corporate world to tackle daunting social problems" (Fast Company 2005).

For nearly ten years, Rare Radio has produced radio serial dramas (or "soap operas") that explore a variety of social and environmental issues in select communities around the world, identified for their conservation importance. By engaging listeners with "compelling characters and dramatic storylines," Rare claims to positively influence peoples' attitudes and behavior (Rare 2006). In 2004, the radio drama *Changing Tides* attracted 52,000 fans in the Western Pacific with its focus on turtle poaching, unplanned pregnancy, and teen suicide. According to a survey conducted by Rare in the *Changing Tides* audience demographic area, 77% of 599 adults surveyed reported learning something about an environmental issue from the soap opera, and 87% learned something about a health issue. Rare's second program, Rare Enterprises, promotes "both economic

and environmental sustainability in fragile natural areas” through ecotourism ventures such as training nature guides, building low-impact trails, and providing “soft loans” to entrepreneurs (Rare 2006). This program has recently launched three community-run ecotourism ventures in Mexico’s Sian Ka’an Biosphere Reserve, Honduras’s Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, and Guatemala’s Tikal National Park.

My academic interests in international conservation, environmental education, and behavior change, as well as a grant from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, led me to intern with Rare’s third program: Rare Pride, which claims to use “innovative approaches to achieving conservation results through community-based education” (Rare 2006). The heart of Pride lies in its campaigns, which are 18-month, intensive conservation efforts that rely on a fusion of traditional education and social marketing strategies to change peoples’ attitudes and influence behavior towards the environment. To date, Rare has run nearly 70 Pride campaigns throughout the world, using the on-the-ground leadership of campaign managers who are funded, trained, and networked through the Rare Pride program.

Although conservation education research has shown that attitude and behavior change involves more than just providing people with information, many environmental and conservation education programs still sit back and hope that, once people understand the problem, they will do something about it. In the particular communities in which they are implemented, Pride campaigns go beyond just raising awareness among average citizens and “appeal to people on an emotional level, generating an increased sense of pride and public stewardship” (Rare 2006). According to this approach, an increased sense of pride toward one’s natural environment, in combination with opportunities for

specific conservation action (such as citizen monitoring or the signing of letters of support for a newly designated nature reserve for example) leads to conservation benefits.

Pride campaigns are managed by people selected for the job because they were born in or (at minimum) currently reside in an area that Rare and its partners have identified as important for biodiversity conservation. Campaign managers must be full-time employees of the in-country conservation organization with which Rare partners to run the Pride campaign in that area. In addition, they are required to have a high school diploma and language proficiency in English or Spanish (Rare 2006). Campaign managers apply to be part of the Rare Pride program, and they are trained and financed for the duration of their campaign by Rare and other donors and collaborators. Their job is to “inspire conservation among thousands of residents, decision-makers, and visitors in their communities” (Rare 2006). In addition, with the completion of the Pride campaign and 120 credits of coursework, campaign managers receive an accredited diploma in Conservation Education from a participating university or “Pride training center.” Training centers currently exist at the University of Kent in Canterbury, England, and the University of Guadalajara, Mexico, with additional training centers under consideration in Indonesia and China.

Pride campaigns identify a charismatic flagship species of environmental and cultural importance (often a bird or mammal), which is promoted as a symbol of local pride using a variety of tools, “from fact sheets, posters, bumper stickers, and billboards to mass marketing techniques (campaign songs, TV and radio announcements, newspaper articles, and music videos) to school presentations, community festivals, sermons, and puppet shows” (Rare 2006). Campaign managers often use creative, offbeat, and attention

getting activities to convey a message, such as a manta ray-shaped cake competition on the island of Komodo in Indonesia, or a Miss Sea Turtle pageant in Baja, Mexico. These activities are geared toward a variety of audiences, such as schoolchildren, teachers, police officers, park officials, farmers, hunters, and clergy. By making conservation messages fun, positive, and engaging, Pride campaigns seek to build awareness of environmental issues as well as support for conservation action, such as the legal designation of protected areas, increased stewardship, and better enforcement of existing conservation laws.

Before they begin their fieldwork, campaign managers receive training in practical skills like using computers, creating marketing materials, and talking with the media, as well as knowledge areas such as ecology, biodiversity, community-based conservation, and social marketing. After completing the 12-week training course, campaign managers return to their communities to begin their Pride campaigns. The campaign itself is quite involved, and the process contains many steps, beginning with a review of scientific literature and a matrix of key stakeholders (see appendix A). Next, the campaign managers involve stakeholders through meetings, during which participants work together to identify area threats. This step is followed by a survey of knowledge, attitudes, and behavior of 1-3% of the target site's population, along with the collection of control group data. Stakeholders then use the data resulting from the initial survey to identify campaign objectives focused on changing knowledge and awareness to positively benefit the key area threats. Finally, all of the above information is consolidated into a project plan, which is the foundation for a year-long Pride campaign involving the assortment of activities mentioned above. In addition, throughout this process campaign

managers complete long-distance assignments designed to help them achieve their campaign goals and make progress toward their diploma. After the campaign has been completed, a second survey is conducted in order to identify changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. Following this step, campaign managers return to their university training center for two weeks in order to share lessons learned and design a follow-up plan for the target area.

In addition to pre-campaign training and a post-campaign follow-up session, the Pride program provides many other kinds of support for the campaign managers, including a CD filled with 1,800 pages of academic information, a Pride manual, two site visits by Rare staff, phone and email support, and finally, the online club that is the focus of this research. The Rare Pride Internet Club (also referred to as simply “the Club”) is an online group created by Rare to allow Pride staff and campaign managers to communicate with each other over great physical distance. All Pride campaigns are run in countries outside of the United States and Europe, and many campaigns are located in very remote areas of the world. For staffing and logistical reasons, it is usually impossible for Rare to visit each Pride campaign manager in his or her location more than twice per year. Rare initiated the Club in December 2002, according to one Pride staff member, as an addition or an “annex” to the numerous other resources offered to the campaign managers.

It must be made clear that the Club is just one part of a larger support and education strategy for the campaign managers. This study’s focus on the Pride Internet Club does not include other facets of the education that Pride campaign managers receive throughout their tenure with Rare. In addition, the Club is by no means the only medium

of communication between members of Pride—they use instant messenger, computer conferencing, email, and the telephone as well. The Club is, however, a unique communication environment in that it allows different cohorts of campaign managers to interact with each other and with staff, and it provides for easy exchange of information, files, and photos.

I chose to take a closer look at the Rare Pride Internet Club in part because of the enthusiasm with which the Pride staff spoke about its effectiveness. Having created the Club in haste with few, if any, formal objectives, they were pleasantly surprised at its frequency of use and the learning and support that seemed to occur in the online environment. As an organization, Rare dedicates a fair amount of resources to learning, measuring success, and improving on past challenges to create a greater conservation impact; for this reason they were interested in an in-depth examination of the Club. I decided to assist Pride in conducting a research project that observed the Club from three different perspectives: that of its original creators and other Rare Pride management staff; the perspective of campaign manager members of the Club; and a sampling of the Club messages themselves. Gathering these multiple perspectives was important in understanding what, if anything, campaign managers are learning on the Club, and how it can be improved to best fit the needs of the people who have come to rely on it for communication and support. In the next section, I outline the theoretical concepts underlying my research as I explored the degree to which the Club facilitates learning and how that process occurs in this unique online environment.

CHAPTER TWO

CONSERVATION, COMPUTERS, AND CONSTRUCTIVISM

Introduction

The Pride program trains mid-level conservation professionals from around the world to be catalysts for change, not just during the year or two that they spend working for Rare, but for life. Rare Pride, therefore, does not have traditional “students;” the learners in this scenario are working campaign managers who often begin the campaign process with years of field and academic experience. They are paid for the work they do with Rare, their tasks and assignments produce real outcomes, and through their work they are aiming to accomplish important conservation objectives. Nor does the Pride campaign experience provide for a traditional learning environment: aside from an initial twelve weeks of formal university training and two weeks of post-campaign follow-up, campaign managers work alone in the field, thousands of miles from the classrooms, lecturers, and support at the universities from which they eventually receive their degrees. Like traditional students, campaign managers receive a diploma at the completion of their campaign; unlike traditional students, for whom the degree is often the principal, or even the only, reason for receiving an education, the degree that a campaign manager obtains seems perhaps trivial in comparison with the work they accomplish in the real world.

The training that Pride campaign managers receive for this purpose comes in many forms, from formal classroom lectures and assignments, to on-the-job fieldwork, to the Rare Pride Internet Club. Although this research project focuses on learning that occurs in the latter (computer-mediated) environment, it is in Rare’s best interest to

ensure that campaign managers are learning as much as they can from all of their experiences so that they can be more effective conservationists, now and in the future. What factors must be present in order to foster a positive, successful learning experience? This is *the* crucial question whatever the environment in which learning occurs.

This chapter reviews literature related to conservation education and learning, and in particular constructivist learning theory, which has caught the attention of educators, academics, and activists alike. In addition, this chapter discusses research in the similarly burgeoning field of computer-mediated communication, and specifically, how CMC can support learning.

Theories of learning

Many scholars have spent their careers trying to understand how people learn. The vast amount of literature on learning spans decades (even centuries, depending on your definition) and numerous academic disciplines, from education, psychology, and women's studies, to math and engineering. The different approaches are often placed within three basic types of learning theory: behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism. In the 1960s and 1970s, learning was often described as a change in behavior, "approached as an outcome – the end product of some process" (Smith 1999:2). Behaviorists such as B. F. Skinner emphasize observable and measurable outcomes in students (Ertmer and Newby 1993:56), and view learners as passive, in need of external motivation, and affected by reinforcement (Skinner 1953). Behaviorists believe that learning has occurred when learners show the correct response to a certain stimulus (Smith and Ragan 1999), and they describe knowledge as being absolute and obtainable by the learner, as noted by Fosnot (1996:8-9):

It is assumed that (1) observations, listening to explanations from teachers who communicate clearly, or engaging in experiences, activities, or practice sessions with feedback will result in learning and (2) that proficient skills will quantify to produce the whole, or more encompassing concept.

Cognitivism developed as a reaction to behaviorism's strong emphasis on observable behavior. Educational psychologists like Jean Piaget and William Perry were proponents of this learning theory that focuses on mental processes. According to this approach, learners actively create knowledge based on their existing cognitive structures.

The construction of knowledge

Currently predominant in the realm of educational theory is constructivism, which is both a philosophy and a theory of knowledge and learning. Derived in part from Piaget's developments in cognitive psychology, constructivist ideas have become increasingly popular in recent years in any number of different fields such as linguistics, political science, and most particularly, the field of psychology (Mahoney 2004). Although constructivism has existed in some form for many centuries, well-known modern constructivist philosophers include Jerome Bruner, Ernst von Glaserfeld, and Lev Vygotsky.

Constructivist learning theory gives us a new understanding about how people learn. One of the key principles of constructivism is the idea that humans construct our own realities: "We as human beings have no access to an objective reality since we are constructing our version of it, while at the same time transforming it and ourselves" (Fosnot 1996:11). As a theory applied to learning, constructivism supposes that knowledge is constructed by the learner as "learning is an active process of creating, rather than acquiring, knowledge" (SEDL 1998:1). Boethel and Dimock (1999:6)

describe knowledge from a constructivist perspective as “not fixed; it is not possible, in fact, to determine objective truth with any absolute certainty.” The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (1998:1) identifies the following guiding principles of constructivism:

- Learners bring unique prior knowledge and beliefs to a learning situation;
- Knowledge is constructed uniquely and individually, in multiple ways, through a variety of authentic tools, resources, experiences, and contexts;
- Learning is both an active and a reflective process;
- Learning is developmental—we make sense of our world by assimilating, accommodating, or rejecting new information;
- Social interaction introduces multiple perspectives on learning;
- Learning is internally controlled and mediated by the learner.

Boethel and Dimock (1999:6-8) would add to the above list that constructivist learning also emphasizes “learning as situated in the context where it occurs,” noting that knowledge is “inextricably tied to the circumstances in which it is constructed and used.” Also, they note that “resistance to change,” occurs once learners have found a balance in understanding that causes them to feel “no need to examine, much less doubt, that understanding.” Constructivist theory supports the learner as an active participant in the process of knowledge acquisition (Stage et al. 1998); and as learning becomes the task of the learner, the role of the teacher changes as well. The job of the educator is thus “not to dispense knowledge but to provide students with opportunities and incentives to build it up” (Von Glasersfeld 1996:3).

Constructivism has had a profound impact on the field of education, helping to spawn the collaborative learning movement (Bruffee 1993; Weimer 2002), and supporting important processes such as learner-centeredness, reflection, social

interaction, peer-to-peer learning, and participation. In traditional learning environments where the power lies in the hands of teachers, student learning can be inhibited (Horton and Friere 1990; Weimer 2002). Perhaps for this reason, learner-centered environments (those in which the locus of power shifts from the teacher to the student) appear to offer the best potential for enhanced personal and cognitive development, higher order reasoning skills, and increased understanding of complex and even conflicting information (Jurmo 1989; SEDL 2000a). Constructivist learning environments are those in which learners have time for reflection, an essential component of problem-solving and important in the synthesis of ideas—indeed we often “don’t realize that we’ve actually gained new knowledge or understanding until we stop to contemplate” (SEDL 2000b:1). Brazilian educator and influential education theorist Paulo Freire believed that reflection is a critical part of the learning process, resulting in a consciousness of action that allows students to create new knowledge by revisiting and revising existing beliefs (Freire 1970).

Social interaction is another important element in the construction of knowledge, as it introduces a variety of perspectives and allows students to explore and test their ideas (Edwards and Shaffer 1999; Juwah 2003; Weimer 2002); some students in fact prefer to learn with their peers (Gaber-Katz and Watson 1991). Building on the ideas of Vygotsky, it is widely held by many researchers that interaction is an essential part of cognitive development and a crucial part of effective learning (Berge 2002).

The term “participatory learning” has come to have different complex meanings, many of which reflect constructivist theory, as noted by Norton in a review of literacy education literature:

Paul Jurmo...described active participation as learners having ‘higher degrees of control, responsibility and reward vis-à-vis program activities.’... Fingeret...described participatory education as a collaborative process that places learners at the centre of instruction...[and] Auerbach described participatory education as a critical education process aimed at social change (Norton 2000).

Barab et al. (2000:8) characterize participatory learning by its capacity to “support natural complexity of content, avoid over-simplification, engage students in the construction of products requiring practices that embody complex concepts, encourage collaboration, and present instruction within real-world contexts.” Norton (2000) lists several elements of participatory learning that have been influenced by progressive education, critical pedagogy, and feminist pedagogies, including: learner-centeredness; experience-based learning; a reciprocal learning relationship between teachers and learners; cooperative group learning; democracy and social change; and gaining voice, the idea that “learners from marginalized groups can gain their voices and create new knowledge.” In a discussion on learner-centered approaches, Norton (2000) also notes benefits to learner participation in programs and organizations, including “personal development, increased confidence and renewed self-esteem...being part of a community, developing personal relationships, sharing knowledge and helping others.”

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) and learning

As constructivist and participatory learning theories have evolved, they have done so in the context of rapidly changing technologies. Computers in particular are facilitating learning in many different contexts, and we are quickly gaining understanding of how computers can aid in the building of skills and knowledge, and how they cannot. These days, web technologies are used at all levels of education and training and, though

the debate continues, some believe they are providing advantages over traditional education formats, such as cost savings, increased interaction with and feedback from students, greater levels of access to students, and more flexibility in approaches to teaching and learning (Khan 1997; Oliver 1999; Weller 2000). The use of computer-mediated communication (CMC), which includes any form of video, audio, or text exchange that requires the use of a computer, has grown significantly in recent years (Dietz-Uhler and Bishop-Clark 2001; Haythornthwaite, Wellman, and Garton 1998).

Research related to CMC has ranged widely, from the effect that CMC has on face-to-face communications (Dietz-Uhler and Bishop-Clark 2001) to understanding how members of electronic support groups establish authority and create community (Galegher, Sproull, and Kiesler 1998). Many people are interested in the potential for CMC to improve education practices, and there is a growing amount of academic research focused on the connections between CMC and learning. CMC can create many innovative and significant opportunities for learning and can be used for a variety of educational purposes, such as sharing information, turning in assignments, distance learning, and interpersonal communication (Barnes 2003). CMC can be found in each of the three main types of learning recognized by education experts: formal learning (“learning through courses offered by academic institutions as a part of a degree program”), non-formal learning (“learning through educational activities organized outside of the formal classroom for specific audiences, with specific learning objectives”), and informal learning (“the lifelong process of learning from daily experiences and the people and resources in your environment”) (Brown and Salafsky 2004:3).

The idea that computer-mediated environments are well suited to support constructivist learning is growing in acceptance (Hung 2001; Hung and Nichani 2001; Mishra 2002; Oliver 1999). For instance, Barab et al. (2000:9) find that “technology-rich, inquiry-based, participatory learning environments for grounded understanding” can challenge students and “ultimately, extend their understandings.” Some forms of CMC, such as e-mail listserves, are known to be useful tools for broadcasting information to students; however, recent research into these types of CMC shows that they can also be used to enhance social interaction and improve the exchange of ideas between peers (Christie and Azzam 2004; Edwards and Shaffer 1999). In situations where students do not have face-to-face contact, it has been shown that CMC can provide them with a strong support system, preventing the “isolation or the feeling of aloneness that many students may feel is the hardest symptom for educators to combat” (Palooff and Pratt, 1999:182). In a 1997 examination of asynchronous learning networks (virtual classrooms designed for anytime/anyplace use), Hiltz and Barry (1997) found that CMC allows students to exchange emotional support, information, and a sense of belonging, and similarly, according to McInnerney and Roberts (2004), well designed online learning experiences can prevent students from feeling isolated.

Even educators in the arenas of conservation and environmental education are using CMC to enhance constructivist-based learning among students of the environment, particularly as the fields move from traditional education “about” and “in” the environment, toward education “for” the environment. For instance, researchers, like Tilbury (1995:207), suggest that environmental education should promote “a sense of responsibility and active pupil participation in resolving environmental problems.” A

study by McMahan and Dawson (1995:321) shows particular advantages of CMC in linking students “separated geographically, but who share common environmental concerns” and in creating environments that increase interaction between students and enhance collaborative learning, both of which prove to be “very effective for the process of scientific inquiry in which students...[deal] with real world problems.” In addition, Ramasubramanian and Logie (1999) find that CMC can enhance participatory learning and thereby empower students in formal classroom settings as they gain insights and new understandings of problems, learn to ask questions, and have the opportunity to use new knowledge to address social concerns.

Conclusion

Our earth’s environmental problems and the solutions that aim to combat them are undeniably complex, and for decades conservationists from the global north have chosen to focus their efforts on scientific assessment, land acquisition, and litigation to name a few common strategies. In recent years, however, some within the global conservation community have recognized that success will not be achieved on a great or lasting scale if the underlying social and economic factors of environmental degradation continue to be ignored. Demand is growing within conservation organizations for professionals with strong people skills and training in collaboration, marketing, and constituency-building.

The field of conservation education in particular has been characterized as a “labor-intensive but cost-effective means of effecting behavioral change” (Norris and Jacobson 1998:40). Defined as the use of education to achieve conservation goals, conservation education is “designed to affect peoples’ awareness, attitudes, and behaviors toward natural resources, [with a specific aim to] develop lifelong knowledge and skills

for conservation action” (Jacobson 1999:224). Unfortunately, conservation educators do not always accomplish their lofty goals. In an analysis of 56 conservation education programs located in the tropics, Norris and Jacobson’s (1998) findings report success in less than half the programs. Given the need for effective conservation professionals and the difficulties involved in creating successful conservation education programs, it is imperative for programs like Rare Pride to train their staff to be effective, and to increase opportunities for learning whenever possible.

Existing literature suggests that the rise in use of CMC coincides with an important movement in education away from traditional teacher-centered, instructivist learning (Barker 1999; Land and Hannafin 1996). It has been argued that didactic education formats do not promote a deep understanding of subject matter and can suppress excitement and creativity in learning (Barab et al. 2000; Ruopp et al. 1993). Constructivist learning, on the other hand, involves learning by doing, and the active engagement of students in constructing their own knowledge and understanding (Klemm 2000; Lambert and Walker 1995). Although not all people agree that constructivist-based learning is always beneficial for students (e.g., Hopper 2003), more and more educators and researchers are moving away from traditional forms of learning to focus on learning based in constructivist philosophies.

As education theory evolves, computer technologies are creating new opportunities in education, allowing students to become more active in their own learning. The idea that computers will create better, more meaningful learning experiences for students has become the next great hope of optimistic academics and educators. Research is beginning to show that computer-mediated environments can

enhance knowledge acquisition by supporting many of the powerful constructivist-based learning processes outlined above. But organizations like Rare are not just interested in “knowledge acquisition” or learning for learning’s sake: Rare’s learners are themselves educators and are trained to be change agents in the communities in which they work and live. One of the main purposes of Pride’s formal university training and diploma program is to help the campaign managers become better, more effective conservation educators, and as they gain knowledge it is hoped that they will be able to apply what they learn directly to their conservation work.

The Pride Internet Club provides us with a special opportunity to examine the connections between computer-mediated communication and constructivist learning, in a conservation-oriented online environment. There is a need for more research on how CMC can facilitate learning, not just in formal classroom settings, and not just for the purpose of receiving a university degree, but also in unique contexts where new knowledge is purposefully applied to real world challenges. By exploring the successes and challenges faced by the Pride Internet Club, this research project aims to enhance understanding of how CMC can help create better learning environments for organizations involved in conservation work. It is my hope that this study will fill a gap in knowledge, the results of which will have the potential to benefit Rare as an organization, as well as the broader fields of conservation and education.

The Pride Internet Club can by no means provide everything that campaign managers need, but is it an important component of their support? What is the potential for the Club to enhance learning on the part of the campaign managers? Can computer communications help create space and context for learning that would otherwise never

happen? What does this learning look like, and how can organizations like Rare set up more successful learning environments? It is my hope that this research project helps answer some of these questions, and as a result, increases our understanding of the potential for computer-mediated communication to enhance learning within the world of conservation.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a description of my research methodology, beginning with background information on the Rare Pride Internet Club, followed by my research question and a description of my research design, including three methods of data collection and analysis.

What's a Wanadoo?

The Rare Pride Internet Club (<http://clubs.wanadoo.co.uk/groups/rarecenter>) is a service of Wanadoo, Europe's most popular broadband provider and a brand of France Telecom, one of the world's leading telecommunications companies. As of June 2005, Wanadoo had more than 9.7 million customers (Wanadoo 2004). The Rare Pride Internet Club, created by Rare on December 17, 2002, is one of many Internet clubs accessible through Wanadoo's club web page, "<http://clubs.wanadoo.co.uk/>." By combining web-based information and email messaging, Wanadoo's clubs create online space for people to keep in touch with each other, share information, manage events, and make decisions (Wanadoo 2004). The Rare Pride Internet Club is private, meaning that members must be invited to join by the club's manager, in this case, Rosemary Godfrey, Rare's Kent Course Manager. Club members are able to post messages directly to the Club; however, the club moderator (also Rosemary Godfrey) has the ability to delete information once it has been posted.

The Rare Pride Internet Club, like all Wanadoo clubs, includes the following components: a homepage with basic club information, an area for messages, an event

calendar, an area for files, picture albums, a voting area, classified ads, a simple database system, and a management area. Club members can email the Club, add events and files, and create votes and lists. Over the span of this research, from January 2005 to May 2006, the number of members has varied as people have joined or dropped out. At the start of this research, there were a total of 45 members, including 28 campaign managers, seven Rare staff members, two employees of Conservation International (a partner of Rare), five university lecturers, and three observers of the Club, including myself.

There are, in fact, two Rare Pride Internet Clubs: one in English (used by English speaking campaign managers, lecturers, and staff), and one in Spanish (used by Spanish-speakers affiliated with Rare around the globe). Rare will soon be creating additional clubs in Bahasa Indonesia and Chinese, among others. Because of my limited foreign language abilities, I was only able to examine the English-speaking club (messages sent to "rarecenter@clubs.wanadoo.co.uk"). This clearly limits the scope of the present research, and the extent to which the findings presented in this thesis are applicable to clubs in other languages is unknown without further research.

Research question

The question that I am asking in this research project is, "What potential is there for computer-mediated communication to enhance learning within conservation education?" At the start of this study, my objectives were to: 1) identify what campaign managers are learning on the Club with respect to conservation education; 2) understand the process by which campaign managers are learning within the Club; 3) determine the Club members' goals and objectives for the Club to understand whether or not these, or other unanticipated goals and objectives, are being met within the Club; 4) understand

what implications the findings have for the individual Club members and for Rare as an organization; 5) provide recommendations to Rare on how the Club might be improved to better meet its members' goals, and 6) share what is learned with the Club's members and others in the fields of conservation education.

Rare has been actively involved in helping design the objectives for this project, and hopefully, the findings will assist Rare campaign managers, lecturers, and staff in their conservation work. Accordingly, the project can be understood as action research, which Berg (2001:179) defines in this way:

A method of research where creating a positive social change is the predominant force driving the investigator and the research...intended to uncover or produce information or knowledge that will be directly useful to a group of people...[and] is meant to *enlighten* or *empower* the average person in the group, motivating them to take up and use the information gathered in the research.

Research design

To answer my research question, I used three methods of data collection, mostly qualitative in nature, including: 1) semi-structured in-depth interviews with a purposive sample of Rare staff, university lecturers, and Conservation International partners; 2) a Web-based and matching paper survey of Club campaign manager participants; and 3) content analysis of electronic messages shared on the Club. Each of these is described in more detail below.

Berg (2004:4) notes that multiple research-design strategies can help researchers “obtain a better, more substantive picture of reality.” The three different research techniques used provided me with a variety of perspectives on the Club from a number of Rare participants (including Rare and other non-profit staff, university lecturers,

campaign managers, club messages, electronic files and photos, etc.), and gave me a richer, deeper, more meaningful understanding of the Club than I could have achieved with only one method. Nevertheless, gathering, organizing, and analyzing data from lengthy interviews, online and paper surveys, and hundreds of electronic messages has been a complex and laborious process, bringing unique strengths as well as weaknesses to the research process.

Understanding the Rare Pride staff perspective

I began my study by conducting semi-structured, in-depth interviews (see appendix B) over the telephone with six Club members who play unique management and/or teaching roles within the Pride program, including three full-time employees of Rare: Paul Butler (Vice President of Programs), Megan Hill (Senior Director, Rare Pride), and Rosemary Godfrey (Kent Course Manager); two lecturers at the University of Kent (Ian Bride and Bob Smith) who are contracted to teach Pride's training course; and Daniela Lerda Klohck, Community Education Program Manager for Conservation International, which has partnered with Rare Pride through the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund to manage a number of Pride campaigns throughout the world. Each of the interview participants was asked if he or she wished his or her name and interview to remain confidential, and all declined; therefore, the interviewees' real names and titles are used in association with their opinions throughout this paper.

I relied on my previous knowledge about the structure of the Pride program, as well as suggestions from my first interviewees, to purposively select these six people to interview. I did this because they make up the majority of Pride's management and English-language course teaching staff, and because together, they provided a wide array

of perspectives on the Club. I did attempt to interview a seventh person (a lecturer at the University of Kent), but the subject did not respond to my requests. Additionally, although there are other staff members at Rare and Conservation International who are involved in the Pride program, their roles in the Club are for the most part as observers.

Using an in-depth, semi-structured interview format to gather data on the Pride team's perspectives allowed me to better understand their original goals for the Club, as well as their perceptions on how the Club is used and how important it is for the Pride program. I felt that this information was best collected from the Club's original creators, and from the people who manage and support the majority of the Club's campaign manager members. A semi-structured interview guide, according to Berg (2001:70), "involves the implementation of a number of predetermined questions and/or special topics....[as well as the] freedom to digress." Since each interviewee plays a unique role within the Pride program, using a semi-structured interview guide gave the interviews some consistency, while also allowing me some needed flexibility to ask different questions of each participant.

Because the interviewees are located around the globe (in England, Washington, DC, and Arlington, VA) and most are frequent travelers, I conducted all of the interviews by phone. The interviews lasted from a half-hour to an hour and a half in length, and were recorded with the interviewees' permission. I transcribed each interview in its entirety, and then began a process of content analysis, a "technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages" (Holsti 1968:608). My approach to content analysis was primarily inductive. This involved careful review of the data before identifying the "dimensions or *themes* that seem

meaningful to the producers of each message” (Berg 2001:245). I then used open coding to recognize larger themes in the data, which I organized into smaller, more specific categories.

Completing the interviews during the first part of my study was quite useful in that the interviewees helped orient me not just to the Pride Internet Club, but also to the various organizations, people, and systems that make up the Pride program. The analysis of these interviews—and the context they provided—became very important as I turned to the next phase of the research: a questionnaire survey of the Pride Internet Club’s campaign managers.

Collecting data in cyberspace

After analyzing the six interviews with Rare Pride’s staff, I used the categories I had developed from the content analysis process to design a survey of Pride’s campaign managers. I created two distribution versions of the survey, each including identical questions: one for the Web, and an electronic version that could be emailed or printed out on paper. The survey was nine Web-pages long (or seven printed pages) with a total of 24 questions, including a mixture of closed- and open-ended questions (appendix B).

The survey was delivered to all of Pride’s campaign managers, past and present, who are members of the English-language Club, a total of 28 people. My main goals in developing the survey were to get answers to the following questions: 1) Do the campaign managers feel the Club is meeting the goals that were identified through the interviews with Rare and CI staff and university lecturers?; 2) Does the Club help the campaign managers with formal university modules and transferable skills learned during their university training?; 3) Is the Club useful in other as of yet unmentioned ways?; and

4) Do the campaign managers have suggestions for how the Club might be improved to be more useful for them? I believed these questions would help me discern what and how the campaign managers are learning through the Club.

Relying on a survey for data collection enabled me to ask questions of a greater number of campaign managers than would have been possible with time- and cost-intensive interviews, as the campaign managers are located in more than 16 different countries (Indonesia, China, South Africa, and Gabon among others), and some work in very remote areas. Time zones, difficult phone connections, and the cost of long-distance calls made conducting phone interviews very inconvenient, and of course in-person interviews were an impossibility due to time and financial constraints. The use of a survey posed its own problems, however, as it was difficult to get as much detailed information as in-depth interviews would have provided me. Also, I worried that the quality of responses would be in part compromised by the language skills of some of the campaign managers, most of whom speak English as a second language. Although I tried to create a relatively simple survey, its length and language barriers may have been a deterrent to some subjects.

Rosemary Godfrey, the official manager for the Club, gave me a list of all of the 45 Club members' names, addresses, and email addresses, including those of the 28 campaign managers, who are divided into cohorts based on the time they begin their training with Rare Pride. At the time of this research, on the Club there were four campaign managers from Kent 1 cohort, five from Kent 2 (although there were only three campaigns conducted within this cohort, there were five different campaign managers involved in the campaigns at one point or another, and I chose to survey all five), eight

from Kent 3, five from Kent 4, four from Kent 5, one “traditional” campaign manager (who began her campaign before the university course system was created by Rare), and one member of the Guadalajara 2 cohort (who speaks English and is therefore on both the Spanish- and English-speaking clubs). Members of the Kent 1 cohort did not use the Pride Internet Club during the time of their employment with Rare because the Club was not developed until after they graduated from the program in August, 2002; however, I chose to include the Kent 1 cohort in the survey, because they have all been members of the Club since its inception and many have continued to be active in the Club long past their official involvement with Rare.

On September 11, 2005, I sent an introductory email message with instructions for completing the survey and a direct Internet link to the web survey through SurveyMonkey.com, an online survey vendor, to 27 of the campaign managers (I was unable to get a correct email address for the 28th). In addition, because I was concerned that some campaign members might not have good Internet access, or any Internet access at all, I mailed paper versions of the survey to all 28 campaign managers. Over many months, three of those surveys were returned marked with bad address stamps, and I was unable to get correct mailing addresses for those participants.

I received eight web survey responses in the 12 days after the first email was sent, after which I sent a very similar follow-up email to all non-responders on September 23, 2005. I received seven more responses via SurveyMonkey.com after the second email request was sent. On September 30, 2005, I sent a third email to all non-responders with the electronic version of the survey attached. Over the next several weeks, I received four additional responses via email with completed surveys attached, and one response via

regular mail, for a total of 19 survey participants: 14 via the Internet survey, four via email, and one via mail. Four of the 14 Internet surveys were returned partially complete, with some of the questions left unanswered. It is unclear whether the campaign managers purposefully chose not to complete the survey or whether there was a technical issue, such as lack of Internet connection, which caused them to have problems completing it. Although I re-sent the Internet link to those people with incomplete surveys, I did not receive further responses from them. Nine campaign managers did not respond to the survey at all. This left me with 15 complete surveys and four partially complete surveys, which were used whenever possible in the below analyses, for a response rate of 68 percent. Out of 19 respondents, three campaign managers were from cohort Kent 1, one from Kent 2, eight from Kent 3, four from Kent 4, and three from Kent 5 (table 1). It is possible that Kent 2 cohort has a lower response rate than others because not all of the campaign managers in this cohort completed the entire campaign process. The campaign manager respondents were from China, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Gabon, Indonesia, Laos, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Republic of Palau, Sierra Leone, and South Africa.

Table 1. Campaign manager survey response rate

| Cohort | Number of campaign managers in cohort | Number of responses | Response rate |
|----------------|---|------------------------|---------------|
| Kent 1 | 4 | 3 | 75% |
| Kent 2 | 5 | 1 | 20% |
| Kent 3 | 8 | 8 | 100% |
| Kent 4 | 5 | 4 | 80% |
| Kent 5 | 4 | 3 | 75% |
| Guadalajara 2 | 1 | 0 | 0% |
| Traditional | 1 | 0 | 0% |
| <i>Summary</i> | <i>28</i> | <i>19</i> | <i>68%</i> |

SurveyMonkey.com collected the web-survey responses, and I added the email and mail surveys I received into the SurveyMonkey database in order to collect the data in one place. All of the survey responses were automatically tabulated by SurveyMonkey, which provided basic means, counts, and some response averages, in addition to responses to open-ended questions. The information I gathered about campaign managers' perspectives on the Club helped me with the final part of my data collection: the analysis of messages on the Club itself.

Messages on the Club

The third leg of my data collection included an examination of the actual messaging on the Pride Internet Club. The Club has been in existence since December

2002, and because I wanted to gain an understanding of how the Club messages might have changed over time I chose as my sample 12 months of messages: four months in 2003, four months in 2004, and four months in 2005. During the interviews, some Rare staff members mentioned that Club use changes throughout the year, positing that use increases just before and after in-person trainings, and decreases when campaign managers are in the middle of their campaigns. To see how Club messaging might change throughout the year, I collected messages from one of every calendar month (January-December), and only one of that particular month over three years, as shown in table 2. Each month averaged a different number of messages, ranging from 28 to 84, and discussion threads, ranging from 11 to 34.

Table 2. Number of threads sampled, by month, and number of threaded replies

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Total |
|------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------|
| 2003 | | | 11 (30) | | | 17 (84) | | | 34 (82) | | | 23 (40) | |
| 2004 | | 28 (61) | | | 18 (32) | | | 19 (39) | | | 12 (28) | | |
| 2005 | 11 (28) | | | 33 (75) | | | 13 (33) | | | 18 (60) | | | |

Note: The top number is the number of discussion threads created that month; the bottom number in parentheses is the total number of messages posted in discussion threads created that month (some of which may have been posted in subsequent months).

I sampled a total of 592 messages: all of the messages from twelve months of the Club spread over three years; 237 of these messages were “initial posts,” messages that started new discussion threads, and 346 messages were replies to initial message posts.

Nine messages that were accidentally repeated or unclear because of language or context were not counted in the totals below, for a total of 583 initial and reply postings.

In order to more easily follow discussions on the Club, I organized the data by “discussion threads” created that month, as opposed to organizing them strictly by date. For example, during the month of March 2003, someone posted a message with the subject line: “Diplomas.” Eight people replied to that message, creating one “Diplomas” discussion thread comprised of nine total messages. There were 11 discussion threads created in March 2003, on such topics as “SurveyPro Help!” and “Factsheets - general,” with a total of 30 messages in this month. Some of the discussion threads for each month include only messages from that month; however, there are messages in many discussion threads from more than one month, as people sometime replied to a particular topic weeks, or even months, after the original message was posted. Therefore, using the above example, although most of the messages in the “Diplomas” discussion thread were posted in March 2003, some messages were added to the discussion in May 2003. All messages in each discussion thread, regardless of the month in which they were posted, were included in my analysis.

I copied and pasted the discussion threads for my analysis into Microsoft Word documents by month to make them easier to organize and code, and to enable me to count the number of messages and discussion threads in each month. Keeping in mind the themes and categories from the interviews and the data I collected from the campaign manager survey, in my analysis of the Club messages I specifically looked for similar content, while identifying new information in the data. In particular, I looked for content related to the four informal goals identified by Rare and CI staff and university lecturers,

described in more detail in the findings chapter of this document: 1) use of the Club as a communication tool, and three distinct functions of that communication: 2) fostering community, 3) managing information, and 4) supporting learning.

This approach was therefore both deductive and inductive, with an emphasis on the latter. The unit of analysis in this process was the message itself; that is, I noted when a particular theme or category occurred within a message, but did not count how many times it might have occurred in a particular message. For example, if a message included ten photo attachments, I coded that message once, not ten separate times for including photo attachments.

Validity and limitations of methodology

My data collection involved qualitative and quantitative methodologies, both of which have their strengths and weaknesses as analytic strategies. Qualitative research, which according to Berg (2001:3) “refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things” in the past has not been accepted by all researchers as “scientific,” because of the difficulties involved in coding symbols that are inherently subjective in nature. Using a mostly qualitative research approach provided me with richer, more in-depth data by allowing me to treat human speech (interviews) and writing (open-ended survey responses and Club emails) as analyzable data.

A qualitative approach is difficult at times, in particular during the coding process, as it is challenging to create separate and distinct (mutually exclusive) categories for large amounts of data. During the analysis process, for which I was the sole coder, I

frequently reviewed my lists to identify any overlapping categories or overlooked data, which I added or revised accordingly.

I also used quantitative methods, which refers to “counts and measures of things” (Berg 2001:3) throughout the three parts of my research. I counted the frequencies of categories in my interviews and during analysis of the Club messages, and I involved quantitative research in the analysis of the web survey, as SurveyMonkey (and I) counted means and frequencies of answers for multiple-choice questions. This method was interesting and convenient, and I do not believe that I could have logistically completed in-depth interviews with the number of people I surveyed. However, the campaign manager survey provided minimal depth compared to the phone interviews with Rare staff.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I gathered data from three different perspectives, to give me a better, more complete understanding of the Club, which I believe is a strength of this research project. Of course, all research has its limitations, and this thesis is no exception. With an unlimited amount of time, resources, and access, this study could have included more peoples’ perspectives on the Club, and an increased understanding of those perspectives. For example, because of time and my language limitations, I was unable to analyze the Spanish-speaking Club, which I believe would add further dimension to this study, and which I hope will be considered in any further research on Pride’s Internet Club. In addition, the Club messages are by nature subjective: there was no way to know from the messages themselves the exact context or meaning intended by the original poster, and I had to interpret them as best I could. As with all qualitative research, subjectivity in the coding process has the potential to

introduce non-measurable bias, and I hope that the transparency of my data collection is sufficient for the reader to trust its accuracy. As mentioned previously in this chapter, lack of Internet access, and occasionally incorrect email and mailing addresses, may have affected my research process and outcomes by biasing my respondents to only those with ready access to the Internet. In addition, language barriers were a limiting factor in the campaign manager survey. Out of 15 campaign manager respondents, only two listed English as their native language (along with Afrikaans). The others' native tongues were Afrikaans, Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese, Fijian, Mende, Creole, Motu, Hula, Palauan, Pohnpeian, and Tagalog. Although they all listed English as a second language in which they are fluent, it was at times difficult for me to understand some of the campaign managers' open-ended survey responses, and I question the ease with which some campaign managers were able to understand the survey in the first place. Finally, one interviewee noted that campaign manager responses to the survey may be limited in their critique of the Club because of the underlying "culture of positivity" that pervades the Pride program and discourages criticism, though anonymity in the survey may have partially alleviated this pressure.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology I used for my research project, which included three distinct parts representing different perspectives on the Club. In the following order, I conducted: 1) six in-depth interviews with four Rare and Conservation International staff members who work with the Pride program and two university lecturers who provide course training for campaign managers; 2) a survey of 19 of 28 campaign managers who are members of the Club; and 3) an analysis of 583 Club

messages, the total number of messages from 12 separate months spread over three years. It was important to first understand the perspectives of the Pride and CI staff and lecturers to try to discern what the original Club goals were, what the interviewees think Club members currently get out of the Club, and where they see it heading in the future. I relied on this information to create the campaign manager survey, which provided me with a different, and useful, perspective on the Club from those it is meant to benefit most. Finally, I chose to examine a sample of Club messages to better understand how the Club is *actually* being used compared to what its members say it is being used for, and what they would like it to be used for in the future. The next chapter presents results from each of the three data sets mentioned above, organized by themes and categories that emerged throughout the research process.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter details my research findings, which are presented with the original research question in mind, “What is the potential for computer-mediated communication to enhance learning in conservation education?” I organized this chapter into six sections, entitled:

- 1) Rare’s goals for the Pride Internet Club
- 2) Whose Club is it?
- 3) What do members do with their Club?
- 4) Benefits of the Club
- 5) Challenges
- 6) Future of the Club: Solutions and suggestions

Rare’s Goals for the Pride Internet Club

I began my research process by interviewing Rare staff, university lecturers, and Conservation International partners involved in the Pride program to understand the original goals of the Club. The Club was first envisioned by Pride’s former Director Paul Butler and University of Kent Course Manager Rosemary Godfrey, who chose to create the Club through a popular European broadband provider called Wanadoo.

Rosemary: “Wanadoo was recommended as one of the top ten chat websites for this sort of communication. We thought Wanadoo was the most user-friendly provider. Wanadoo had what we wanted.”

According to the interviewees, little planning went into creating the Club, and there have never been any written goals. For instance, as Paul said, “It was set up on a whim, but obviously as something that we thought was a good idea.” Despite the lack of clear

planning and concrete objectives, each of the six interviewees identified what they thought were the original, informal, goals of the Club, which I organized into four distinct categories. First, and most importantly, the Club was seen as a tool for facilitating communication, which serves the other three goals of: fostering community, managing information, and supporting learning. Although each goal has unique characteristics, there are significant links among them, as described below.

Facilitating communication

Each of the six interviewees mentioned facilitating communication as one of the goals of the Club, often defined simply as people keeping in touch. For instance:

Daniela: “Using the club as a way to communicate with each other.”

Paul: “One of the mandates...was to develop some mechanism for local campaign managers to keep in touch with one another while they were out in the field... We recognized the power of the Internet...to communicate between people very far away.”

Ian: “Its main purpose is just to keep everybody aware of what’s going on...to keep people in contact with each other.”

Megan: “A good way to keep in touch with a lot of people by sending the same message to multiple people.”

Communication in this instance can be viewed as a tool for accomplishing the other Club goals.

Fostering community among Club members

After communication, fostering community among Club members was the most frequently mentioned goal by interviewees. This goal is defined in part by the following sub-categories: creating emotional connection, building friendships, providing support

and encouraging a sense of “family.” The hope that a sense of community among Club members would reduce feelings of isolation is also mentioned in this context. The following quotations illustrate how important this Club goal is to the interviewees:

Ian: “Developing the sense of family between the Club members...that’s what I see as the main purpose.”

Paul: “The ability to communicate and build a college of friends...Before, campaigns were run one by one—they never communicated with each other—so what you’ve got is a family in total isolation...The initial rationale was to begin to build a family and to strengthen those bonds.”

Bob: “To communicate, to provide a sense of community with the students [campaign managers].”

Megan: “Sharing and creating of space for people to feel connected to other people out there....so they don’t feel alone, like they were the only ones who have ever done something like this. It’s so they can share their experiences, like as a family.”

Daniela: “A virtual Club that exists to connect the students [campaign managers] with each other, and for them to provide support to each other.”

Managing information

Managing information was an important but less frequently mentioned goal of the Club, and can be defined as the storing of information (including files, photographs, ideas, experiences) that can be shared with others. Paul, for instance, thinks of the Club as “a filing cabinet where people can access files and examples.” As Rosemary explained:

“There were a lot of emails going around that were flying between them...a lot of valuable information that would be useful to them as individuals if they wanted to refer back to it. They were sharing files and notes and so on...so we thought we should set up a club to really manage all of this information in a way that would be useful and fun for the students [campaign managers].”

Paul also noted that learning is the reason for managing information on the Club, “a forum for exchanging substantive issues, for acting as a filing cabinet, acting as a photo album, so they can learn substantively from one another.”

Supporting learning

The term learning was mentioned only once in the six interviews as a Club goal by Paul:

“The rationale for setting it up was that we wanted to build a family-like atmosphere between campaign managers, so that they saw that learning from each other was a way of sharing experiences and being part of the family so to speak; at the same time, we wanted the facility to enhance distance learning.”

However, as discussed in chapter two of this thesis, social interaction and sharing with others is an important component of a successful constructivist learning environment, and the idea of sharing, also noted in the above quote, emerged in four out of the six interviews. In the interviews, sharing (of knowledge, experience, advice, information, or ideas), was described both as a way for people to connect, and a tangible result of the communication and community-building connection that occurs on the Club. As Daniela put it, the Club is “a virtual space for people to share information and to converse... They are encouraged to communicate through the club so that people have access to the different types of dialogue that are happening... a way for people to share information, share files, share working materials.” Rosemary also described the Club as “a forum for sharing experiences and exchanging knowledge.”

Learning as a goal on the Club is not limited to campaign manager interaction, but includes exchanges between campaign managers and lecturers, as well as other Rare staff

like Rosemary, who is both a university course manager and manager of the Club. As Paul explained, the Club also acts as “a forum for Rare lecturers exchanging teaching experiences...the lecturers participating...and the course manager issuing instructions and guidance on things.”

Although the Club was not started with official goals in mind, there is much consensus among the interviewees as to its original purpose. Facilitating communication, fostering community, managing information, and supporting learning were identified as unique, yet interconnected informal Club goals. Interestingly, despite the Pride program’s mission to create effective conservationists, interviewees mentioned conservation education in the context of Club goals only once, briefly, when Rosemary noted: “It’s all for Pride campaigners and all about conservation education.”

In general, the three communication functions of the Club (fostering community, managing information, and supporting learning) closely match patterns found in other similar computer-mediated environments. Herrman (1995) identified community-building, administrative, and academic communications on listservs, while another design team found three similar patterns in their online communications:

Informative messages—posing and answering questions and conveying important information; administrative messages—keeping individual team members on task and the project as a whole on track; and supportive messages—giving positive feedback and moral support to people who were really working hard and doing a good job (Sherry and Meyers 1998:15).

The next section discusses for whom the Club was created, who is expected to use it, and who is using it most.

Whose Club is it?

At the time of this research, 28 (or 62%) of the Club's 45 members were campaign managers. The remaining 17 people on the Club included nine Rare and Conservation International staff members, five university lecturers, and three outside observers, including myself. Although they were not listed as current members, two other Rare staff posted messages during the time period of the Club that I analyzed. The findings in this section indicate that, indeed, Rare encourages campaign manager "ownership" of the Club in a variety of ways in order to increase a sense of community and belonging on the Club. Yet, it seems that individual campaign managers are still using the Club less often than Rare would like.

"It's the students' club..."

According to two interviewees, Rare makes a strong effort to restrict membership in the Club to the student campaign managers:

Paul: "We've tried to keep it pretty restricted so we don't have too many outsiders on it...because we want them [campaign managers] to see it as their club...and we don't want them to see a whole bunch of names they're not familiar with."

Megan: "Rosemary has been really strict about managing the membership...it's only for people working with campaigns."

Membership is controlled in part so that campaign managers feel more ownership of the Club. Megan and Paul both noted that the Club belongs to the campaign managers:

Megan: "It's really up to them to make what they want out of it."

Paul: "It's their Club, it's the students' [campaign managers'] Club... We've allowed them to say anything. If they want to talk about their birthday party, no problem."

It is not clear from the survey that the campaign managers feel as much ownership of the Club as Rare would like. Of the 17 campaign managers who responded to the statement: “I feel like the Club belongs to the campaign managers and we can make what we want out of it,” seven people (or 41%) stated they agreed or strongly agreed with the sentiment, and eight (or 47%) stated they were neutral about it. One person strongly disagreed (6%), and one said they did not know (6%). Although seven people indicated that they feel ownership of the Club, more than half (59%) felt neutral about the subject, or disagreed entirely. It is difficult to know how to interpret this neutrality.

Another way to look at whether the campaign managers feel ownership of the Club is to look at usage rates, first by group and then by average number of messages posted per Club member. As illustrated in the tables below, analysis of the use of the Club shows that, overall, campaign managers as a *group* use the Club somewhat more frequently than the other two groups of members (Rare/Conservation International staff and university lecturers). I sampled a total of 592 messages: all of the messages from twelve months of the Club spread over three years; 237 of these messages were “initial posts”: messages that started new discussion threads; 346 messages were replies to initial message posts. Nine messages that were accidentally repeated or unclear because of language or context were not counted in the totals below, for a total of 583 initial and reply postings.

Table 3. Club message initial posts by member group

| Club member group | Number of initial posts | Percentage of total initial posts |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Rare and CI staff | 111 | 47% |
| Campaign manager | 106 | 45% |
| Lecturer | 20 | 8% |
| TOTAL | 237 | 100% |

Of 237 initial post messages, Rare and Conservation International staff (nine people) sent 47%, or a total of 111 messages. Campaign managers (21 people) sent 45%, or 106 initial posts. The lecturers (three people) sent 8%, or 20 initial posts.

Table 4. Club message reply posts by member group

| Club member group | Number of reply posts | Percentage of total reply posts |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Campaign manager | 219 | 63% |
| Rare and CI staff | 121 | 35% |
| Lecturer | 6 | 2% |
| Total | 346 | 100% |

Of 346 messages replying to the initial posts, the campaign managers (26 people) sent 63%, or 219 messages. Rare and CI staff (seven people) sent 35%, or 121 reply messages, and the lecturers (three people) sent 2%, or six of the total reply messages.

Table 5: Total number of messages posted by member group

| Club member group | Number of posts (initial and reply) | Percentage of posts (initial and reply) |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Campaign managers (28) | 325 | 56% |
| Rare and CI staff (11) | 232 | 40% |
| Lecturer (5) | 26 | 4% |
| Total | 583 | 100% |

Note: The number in parentheses in the left column is the number of posters in that member group.

Of the total messages posted (including initial and reply messages), the campaign managers (28 people) sent 325 messages (56%); Rare and CI (11 people) sent 232 messages (40%); and the university lecturers (5 people) sent 26 messages (4%).

From these numbers, it seems that campaign managers are certainly using the Club, and, overall, they are posting more messages than other member groups. It is important to keep in mind, however, that there are many more campaign managers than there are Rare/CI staff or university lecturer members on the Club. When we look at the average number of messages posted per member, it becomes apparent that *individual* Rare and CI staff members post almost twice as many messages as individual campaign managers. Rare and CI staff posted an average of 21.1 messages per person, campaign managers posted an average of 11.6 messages per person, and lecturers posted an average of 5.2 messages per person. So, although campaign managers post more messages as a group (because their group has more members), individually they post much less frequently than Rare and CI staff. This may be in part due to some of the challenges of the Club, outlined later in this chapter.

Participation

As shown above, although campaign managers do use the Club, individually they don't use it as much as Rare might like. In general, interviewees noted the Club is not used much, or at least not as much as it could be used by all its members. Four people said that campaign manager use of the Club tends to be less frequent while they are in the middle of their Pride campaigns, and use tends to increase after the Pride campaigns have been completed, as well as just before and after in-person training periods at the university. Two interviewees reasoned this is because campaign members are too busy during their campaigns to use the Club.

Rosemary: "What we see is the current campaigners don't use it as much as the past campaigners...I think it's only because the current campaigners don't have time to sit there and do it."

Megan: "When the campaigns were first getting started it was used quite frequently, and now that they have been in the throes of implementation and everything, it has dropped quite a bit as far as the frequency of use."

Paul: "Messages boom just before or after they return from Kent because they re-engage with each other and then during the campaign they're incredibly busy."

Three Pride and CI staff mentioned during the interviews that they rarely use the Club, or feel they should use it more frequently.

Daniela: "I don't use it too much."

Rosemary: "I could use it more, I could try...I'm sure I don't use it enough."

Paul: "I read close to 100% and respond close to 1%."

Both Rare staff and lecturers noted that lecturers do not use the Club much, despite Rare's hopes for them to use it more.

Bob: "I don't use it often, actually."

Ian: "I tend to be a recipient of the emails rather than actually go onto the club...my role would be that of a passive member rather than an active member, per se."

Paul: "Certainly my hope is that they would use it and use it more than they do from what I've seen. The suspicion is that they do this more one-on-one and the suspicion is that 90% of their involvement is right around their assignment time, so they may check it when there's an assignment or right around then, but I have a strong suspicion most of them seldom check it otherwise."

Paul alludes to lack of time and additional pay as reasons for infrequent participation on the part of the lecturers: "[The lecturers] perhaps don't see [the Club] as their responsibility in the same way as a Rare employee like Rosemary would...they are not contracted to use it...and have busy, busy schedules."

The above data suggests that many interviewees think there should be more participation on the Club by all members; even Rare staff members think they should use it more often, although they are already using it more frequently than individual campaign managers and lecturers. In particular, interviewees seem to want current campaign manager and lecturers to use the Club more. In this next section, I examine more closely campaign manager participation on the Club.

Are campaign managers required to use the Club?

When questioned if campaign managers are "required" to use the Club, Rare and CI staff and lecturer interviewees were often hesitant about giving a firm yes or no answer. It seems from their responses, however, that campaign managers are expected and encouraged to use the Club:

Megan: “They are all invited to join...Normally we ask them to submit their assignments through the Club and that way they need it to be able to fulfill the campaign...I don’t think anyone goes back to anybody and says, hey you’re not sending anything to the Club...Some people do participate more than others and they’re not punished or marked on it or anything like that.”

Rosemary: “Well actually they are [required to use the Club] because I do send out information that is important...so they really are required to use it. Occasionally people say I haven’t accessed it for a month...and I say ‘well please do’ because even if they don’t want to use it so much themselves as a two-way thing, at least they need to be receiving information.”

Daniela: “Nobody can force anybody to participate, but they are told to participate...People should be free to participate. They shouldn’t be made to participate.”

Several times interviewees mentioned that there is no penalty or punishment for campaign managers who infrequently or never post messages on the Club. This is in part because, as noted earlier in this chapter, there is a feeling that as the Club really belongs to the campaign managers, they should have the right to participate or not. By posting important information on the Club that campaign members need to do their assignments and run their campaigns, Rare strongly encourages participants to use the Club without penalizing those who don’t. If campaign managers do not use the Club, they don’t receive the information they need.

One of the additional difficulties with requiring campaign managers to use the Club is that not every campaign manager has the ability to use it, due to limited Internet access, as described by Paul: “We don’t want, say, those who use it to get some big reward because then you penalize those who have difficulty using it. All you can do is say please use the Club, please share...” If there are no consequences for non-participation, what does the Club offer its members to encourage their involvement? The

next two sections outline how Club members describe their current use of the Club, and what they see as the benefits of their membership.

What do members do with their Club?

In this section I outline uses of the Club as reported by its members. Campaign managers, for example, reported using all of the services of the Club offered through Wanadoo, though they used some much less frequently than others. Out of eighteen respondents to the survey, 13 campaign managers reported (in closed-ended responses) that they use the Club to send messages; 13 reported using it to receive messages; 12 said they have used it to post or view photos; 11 reported using the Club to view archived messages; ten have posted or viewed files on the Club; nine have used it to view other members' contact information; nine reported using the Club to post or view links; eight have used it to view the calendar; and four campaign managers said they have used the Club to vote on an issue. In addition, when asked for what purposes they use the Club other than those listed above, two campaign managers responded (in open-ended responses) that they use it to ask for advice, help, sharing, and encouragement from other people:

Campaign manager: "I used it to sort for help from colleagues elsewhere."

Campaign manager: "Asking advice, sharing experience and encourage the spirit amongst any member of the Pride campaign around the world."

In addition to Club uses reported by campaign managers, Rare and CI staff and university lecturers described using the Club for three basic purposes: communicating information, management, and support.

Communicating information

Using the Club to send and receive important information, particularly instructions and assignments, is part of the role that Rare staff and lecturer interviewees fulfill on the Club:

Rosemary: "Sending out instructions."

Bob: "To send out information about assignments to everyone."

Ian: "I've used the club, partly sometimes in relation to field assignments...occasionally to send a message, but normally I just receive the emails and see what's going on."

Daniela: "When I have a message that is beyond just feedback for a particular individual, like an announcement of an opportunity for funding or something interesting that I have found, I put it up there. Or when people have sent a general message to everybody out there, I respond."

Management

Three interviewees also mentioned that the Club is used for management tasks, in particular dealing with the administrative functions of the Club and using the Club for Pride program assessment. Rosemary sees managing the technical side of the Club as part of her role: "Really helping people to use it...the technical side of it... managing it and making sure it's functioning—that's my main role...It's useful for managing information from me to them." In fact, Daniela described Rosemary's Club manager role as the main use of the Club:

"Right now it's just used as a way for Rosemary to remind people that they have to hand in their assignment or their monthly report or this is what the summary for your assignment is or it's so-and-so's birthday."

One staff member, Megan Hill, described campaign manager assessment as part of her role on the Club.

Megan: “I use it informally as an assessment of a campaign manager’s activities and willingness to share stories back and forth and their overall activities... The Club is kind of a tool for us to work with them, because it’s the way of our communicating where they are supposed to be in the process.”

Interestingly, although Rosemary takes some ownership of the Club as its manager, no interviewees imagined themselves assuming the role of moderator; in fact, both

Rosemary and Daniela said they consciously do not take on that role:

Rosemary: “I could, if I wanted to, set it up so that every message that went through the Club had to be approved by me. But I don’t want to do that because...it’s got a nice feel of not being censored and not being too controlled. I think if we did it that way people wouldn’t use it as much.”

Daniela: “I don’t want to take on the role of the moderator...so I refrain a lot of times from doing more, from making it a more active space, because I don’t think that that’s my role, and I don’t want to take over the space.”

Encouragement

Two Rare staff members said that encouraging the campaign managers to use the Club, and encouraging them in a variety of ways throughout their campaigns is part of their role. Rosemary noted that she makes an effort to “give people ideas about how to use it...encouraging people to use it,” and Paul said, “I tend to use it rarely and more for the personal side, for messages of hope and inspiration and congratulations.”

Benefits of the Club

The above sections of this chapter give us an understanding of what the original, informal, goals were for the Club, and for what purposes its members are currently using it. This section outlines the benefits that its members believe they receive from using the Club. The findings in this section also show that the Club is in fact meeting its identified

original goals of facilitating communication, fostering community, managing information, and supporting learning, with varying degrees of success.

Overall importance of the Club

As discussed in earlier chapters, the Club is not the only form of support that campaign managers receive from Rare. In his interview, Paul noted, “The Club was always seen as an addition.” As evidenced in table 6, when asked to compare the Club to other forms of support they receive throughout the Pride campaign process, 13 of 18 (72%) campaign manager respondents reported the pre-campaign university training as more important than other kinds of support they receive during their Pride Campaigns. Of the remaining five campaign managers, two listed the Pride manual, two listed site visits, and one person listed phone/email/instant messaging as more important than other kinds of support. Additionally, 11 of the 18 campaign managers reported that the Pride Internet Club was less important than all of the other kinds of support they receive during their Pride campaigns. Of the remaining seven respondents, two listed phone/email/instant messaging, two listed post-campaign university wrap-up, and one listed the Pride manual as less important than other kinds of support. Two people answered, “don’t know.”

Table 6. Ratings of importance of types of support offered to campaign managers (N=18)

| Level of importance | Pre-campaign university training | Pride manual | Site visits | Pride Internet Club | Phone/email/ instant messaging | Post-campaign university wrap-up | Don't Know |
|---------------------|--|--------------|-------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|------------|
| 1 (more important) | 13 (72%) | 2 (11%) | 2 (11%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (6%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |
| 2 | 3 (17%) | 8 (44%) | 5 (28%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (6%) | 1 (6%) | 0 (0%) |
| 3 | 2 (11%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (44%) | 1 (6%) | 6 (33%) | 1 (6%) | 0 (0%) |
| 4 | 0 (0%) | 1 (6%) | 2 (11%) | 3 (17%) | 6 (33%) | 6 (33%) | 0 (0%) |
| 5 | 0 (0%) | 5 (28%) | 1 (6%) | 2 (11%) | 2 (11%) | 7 (39%) | 1 (6%) |
| 6 (less important) | 0 (0%) | 1 (6%) | 0 (0%) | 11 (61%) | 2 (11%) | 2 (11%) | 2 (11%) |

Although the Club may not be as important as other types of support, of the eighteen campaign manager survey respondents, 13 people (or 72%) reported that, overall, the Pride Internet Club is somewhat or very important to them (eight reported that it was very important to them; five reported that it is somewhat important to them). Four people said they felt neutral about the Club's importance; and one person responded that the Club was not very important.

In addition, campaign managers reported receiving a variety of benefits from the Club, some of which are outlined in table A1 (see appendix C). This table shows how 17 campaign managers surveyed responded to statements regarding benefits and challenges identified by Rare/CI staff and university lecturers during the interviews. The three statements with which campaign managers most agreed were: 1) The Club helps me to remember other members' birthdays; 2) The Club helps me to feel like I am part of the Rare family; and 3) The Club helps me to build friendships with other Campaign Managers. The three statements campaign managers most disagreed with were: 1) The Club helps me to complete my assignments; 2) I feel intimidated about posting messages on the Club; 3) I worry that things I post on the Club may negatively impact my grades. The responses to each of these statements, and their importance in the overall research findings, will be described in more detail below.

Is the Club meeting its goals?

Below, I have organized benefits reported by Club members into the same four major categories listed above for Club goals: facilitating communication, fostering community, managing information, and supporting learning. The findings indicate that the Club is

meeting its goals with a varying degree of success; in addition, there are a few benefits not mentioned as original goals, which are described in the following pages.

Facilitating communication

Five of the six staff and lecturer interviewees reported that facilitating communication, in addition to being one of the most important goals of the Club, is also an actual tangible benefit of the Club for its members.

Rosemary: “It makes it easier for them to communicate with each other because it’s so much easier to send a message to one address then fiddling around and printing out ten addresses from their address book which they might not even be using... so I just think it’s convenient for them as a way of keeping in touch with their colleagues.”

Megan: “I think the club offers them a way to communicate...It helps them be able to stay in touch with everyone.”

Bob: “They certainly benefit from the communication with the group.”

Ian: “I think they’re kept up to date, really, but also a quick way of contacting everybody. It’s a good communication vehicle in that respect.”

Paul: “I think what we get is a program where campaign managers who have completed their official campaigns are still in touch with one another and are still in touch with Rare. We can track them down relatively easily because we have an ability to keep them involved and keep them engaged. So we’ve lost contact with the vast majority of the early campaign managers, whereas we’ve lost contact with almost none of those that have been through the program using the club.”

Daniela mentioned that communication is really the only benefit that Conservation International as an organization receives from the Club. “[Conservation International] doesn’t really get anything out of the club, other than knowing that it’s an easy way to get everybody.”

Campaign managers also reported that the Club helps them to communicate, as shown in table A1 (appendix C). Eighty-two percent (82%) of campaign managers responded that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “The Club helps me to communicate with Pride staff lecturers and other Campaign Managers.” Elsewhere in the survey, campaign managers noted several times that the Club facilitates ease of communication: “Being in contact with everyone at any given time”; “To stay in touch with other cohort members”; “It’s easy to contact other Rare counterparts”; “Getting in touch with friends and keeping up new acquaintances”; “I have an updated information about the Pride Campaign all over the world.”

Fostering community

The creation of a sense of community among Club members through emotional connection, the building of friendships, professional relationships, and a “family” atmosphere was a benefit that Rare and CI staff and lecturers described most frequently and in greatest depth. Support and encouragement are sometimes mentioned in this category, and two people noted a particular benefit of finding a “sense of community,” as Bob put it, through the Club is that campaign managers do not feel as isolated and alone in their work.

Megan: “I think the biggest one is that sense of community...The club is kind of a forum where they can have that sense of not being alone and there are other people out there who either are doing it at the same time or have done it... We want them to feel like they are part of a bigger effort.”

Ian: “I think they get a very very positive sense of community and sharing and the need for support... You can see that the relationships between them in the club. It appears to me that the club is an important way of maintaining the atmosphere, it really has a completely different way, it creates a very different vibe for the student and the relationships between

them, and to me as a teacher it's a delight to work in that sort of environment."

Paul: "Feeling that you're not alone. These huge challenges that face us in conservation, whether it's tsunamis, whether it's loggers threatening your life, getting shot at, that there are other people that are sharing those same experiences...building those kinds of relationships that will last long beyond when they sort of leave Rare's sphere of immediate influence...I think the feeling that they are a unique group of individuals that can turn to each other as friends and as colleagues....a feeling of communication within a family."

Daniela: "I think that there are times when the students [campaign managers] who haven't met each other feel part of this bigger thing. They feel part of a bigger family of people who have gone through a similar experience as they have. And that's probably a very comforting thing, but I don't think they're getting anything more than that."

Interviewees noted that the Club provides a way for campaign managers to build relationships whether or not they have had face-to-face contact with other people on the Club.

Megan: "In Kent at the beginning they share the personal relationships, they share the same kinds of fears when they go back about oh my gosh, how am I going to do this big assignment? What did I get myself into? And then they have something in common that they can relate to, and that is what they are doing in their pride campaigns."

Paul: "This feeling that they are in some kind of group that has commonalities between it and this is a mechanism for them to share that, particularly between cohorts that have not met each other."

Results from the campaign manager survey (shown in table A1, see appendix C) indicate that campaign managers also feel they benefit from emotional connection and the building of friendships and "Rare family." The survey asked them how much they agreed with the following statements, "The Club helps me to remember other members' birthdays," "The Club helps me to feel like I am part of the Rare family," "The Club helps me to build friendships with other Campaign Managers," and "The Club helps me

to feel less isolated.” In these instances, campaign managers expressed fairly strong agreement, with 94%, 94%, 88%, and 76% of campaign managers reporting they agree or strongly agree with the respective statements above. In addition, many campaign managers noted this benefit in open-ended responses to the survey, as shown in the following quotes from them in the survey:

“Making friends with other cohort students [campaign managers] and being of course remembered on your birthdays which was nice. Having to be thought of from different parts of the world.”

“Sense of close friend and family feeling, quick response from everyone, and attention-caring.”

“Friends and social relationship among Pride campaigner.”

“I have been hearing about my classmates. Just knowing that they are still doing the same thing like I do keeps me going.”

“Feeling of being part of a 'global family' in conservation education.”

“Many ways, especially having friends/family whose had same back ground and thought of general conservation issues from different field.”

Campaign managers also stated that they believe the Club helps them to support one another, as evidenced in 82% of campaign manager survey respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement, “The Club helps us (Campaign Managers) to support each other during our Pride Campaigns” (table A1). Two campaign managers noted encouragement and support in their open-ended survey responses: “You become friends with cohort members, and you encourage each other and acknowledge each other”; and “Being in the Pride Internet Club [is] like having a big extending family that always encourage your spirit especially on the difficult situation during the implementation time.”

Expressions of community, friendship, and family are included in Club messages more frequently than any other type of communication. Of messages sampled, 66% (382 messages) contained expressions of emotional support, such as, offerings of praise, thanks, appreciation, congratulations, encouragement, offers of help, best wishes, and friendly chit-chat. This category also included messages introducing new Club members, expressions of love and concern, greetings, as well as expressions of discouragement and requests for support for oneself or others. The following are examples of messages in this category:

Subject: Reminder - Happy Birthday to [Name] in Indonesia!!

Posted by [Campaign Manager]

Dearest [Name],

This comes in late but better late than never!!! Hope you had a very happy birthday... Many happy returns of the day!!!

I wish all the love, fulfillment and peace of mind life could offer.

Thanks for being there for us!

Subject: The Prince is in the House !

Posted by [Campaign Manager]

OH [Name]!

Thanks for the encouragement! we will keep pushing on I am sure of that. Rosemary is helping me out here. My computer nearly died in three days from today's date. But we have saved its life again. We still have to yet install some programmes that I have lost. from my computer.

...Thanks to you all my friends, I know each one of us have our own individual challenges in carrying this campaign. It is indeed a unique programme!

My best to you all.

Subject: Re: [rarecenter] Letter from Aceh

Posted by [Campaign Manager]

dear [Name],

When my husband first heard the news from TV, he asked me where you are in Aceh? and my kids came running to me asking about [Name] and [Name]. [Name] and [Name] must be staying at a safe distance except for [Name] who lives by the sea. But when I saw, how destructive tsunami was in Thailand, I tried to call your mobile phone but you can't be reached. So, I felt a chilling spine and said a little prayer for the three of

you. I don't even want to open my mail for fear that I would hear some bad news.

But I realized that this is our time to gather our acts together, no matter how hard nature turns back at us, It is never too late to push for conservation. The Philippines had tasted tragedies before you do, I know how it feels to see dead bodies floating and during the flood, watch people wade endlessly to reach the safe ground. These incidents build our muscles for us to be able to swim the tide of tolerance for illegal activities, ignorance for the environmental impacts of forest destruction, and indifference for our call for conservation.

A businessmen-politician whom I met during my fund raising visits asked me, "Can you conserve the protected area, if I will give you money? and I said, "no, your money cannot conserve the protected area but your support will." She stared at me and said, " Okey, I will give you five thousand (\$100), write my friends to donate and I will deliver."

When I returned to the car, my tears fell as I think of you. " [Name], this is all I can do for you, today, pray for your safety and health, and work harder to conserve my country's forest so you will not worry for our safety as we do for you today."

God bless you and Mom loves you.
Happy New Life!
all the best.

Managing information

Enabling members to manage information was a benefit of the Club mentioned by two interviewees, Paul and Rosemary, who said "It's also like a filing system, a convenient place where we can put and pull documents and where they can put photos, and they can also file their assignments there if they want to. A convenient place to store files." Campaign managers surveyed seemed unsure about the helpfulness of the Club in managing information. When asked how much they agreed with the statement, "The Club helps me to manage information (files photos etc.)," 47% of campaign managers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, 29% disagreed or strongly disagreed, 18%

responded neutrally, and one person, or 6%, responded Don't Know (table A1). One person did note that they use the Club for "Pictures, photos, contacts."

Club members are also managing other types of information through the Club, besides just photos and files. They are using the Club for managing programmatic information, such as updates and requests of a personal or organizational nature. These messages are less educational and substantive in nature, rather they are generally brief and function basically to keep people on track with the many aspects of the Pride program. Of the Club messages sampled in this category, 141 (or 24 %) helped keep people "up to date" and "in contact" with each other through updates on resources, requirements, logistics, locations, contact information, events, and current projects or activities, as well as materials sent or received and reminders of assignments due. Below are two examples of actual Club messages that fall into this category.

Subject: Updating my address book

Posted by [Campaign Manager]

Hi

Can you please enter your contact details in my address book? Click on the link below:

<http://www.bebo.com/fr1/13126331a309925937b198994406c976948028d>

20

After we are connected, in the future, any changes you make in your contact details will be sent to me.

Thanks for your help.

Subject: Reminder-Monthly Report Reminder-Don't forget to send!

Posted by Rosemary Godfrey

Dear "RARE Center" member,

Rosemary Godfrey asked Wanadoo Clubs to remind you of this event.

Event: Monthly Report Reminder - Don't forget to send!

Date : 29 August 2004 (GMT +00:00) 11:40 (Duration: 1 Hour)

Clearly, the Club is meeting the goals of facilitating communication, fostering community, and information management, as described above. Is it also supporting a successful learning environment for the campaign managers? The next section discusses researching findings related to learning on the Pride Internet Club.

Supporting learning

During the interviews I conducted with Rare and CI staff and university lecturers, there was some disagreement in opinion about whether or not the campaign managers are learning on the Club. Some interviewees do see evidence of learning.

Bob: “Yes, I’m sure they are [learning] a bit.”

Rosemary: “I definitely think they’re learning through the Club.”

Others do not see the Club being used as a space for learning.

Ian: “I don’t see [the Club as a learning resource] so far—potentially maybe, but so far I don’t see that the Club has provided that. I don’t see the students [campaign managers] using it in that way.”

Daniela: “I think in terms of learning, strengthening their communication and education capacity as conservation educators, I don’t see a lot of that going on.”

The discrepancy is perhaps in part a result of people holding different expectations for the type of learning they hope to occur on the Club. Below, each of the Rare staff members interviewed (Megan, Paul, and Rosemary) describe the learning of practical skills on the Club and learning through the peer-sharing of experiences, information, experiences, advice, and frustrations:

Megan: “I think they learn about other countries...and political things. I think they learn a lot of management issues out of it as people share their

frustrations...shared experiences in other places...[The Club] takes away the geographic boundaries with learning...also some of the cultural boundaries.”

Paul: “I think they’re learning shared experiences. I think that’s the most important thing, that they’re not alone, that they have others they can turn to if nothing else for moral support in times of challenges, that they have a family, as opposed to maybe learning particular individual skills.”

Rosemary: “The area where I see most [learning] is past Pride campaigners, people who have already done it, already graduated, giving advice to people who are doing it now. They really do give lovely insights and useful information. [They are] learning from each other...A lot of the good advice still comes from the past Pride campaigners.”

In addition to learning from their peers, two interviewees noted that campaign managers also learn from the lecturers through the feedback they get on the Club about their assignments. For instance:

Megan: “They [campaign managers] are given the opportunity to send in assignments a couple of weeks early so they can get feedback before the final date. Maybe half the students [campaign managers] take advantage of that.”

Daniela, Community Education Program Manager for Conservation International, in particular disagreed, maintaining that there is not much sharing occurring on the Club. During her interview she stated that the Club is not used as a space for sharing, though it has the potential to be used this way. She mentioned a barrier to sharing might be Rare’s interest in controlling information on the Club:

“It’s not used as a space for sharing, like, ‘here’s my first draft of the poster, hey everybody comment on this.’ I think it would be a great space to do that, especially given that the graduates of the program are also connected and could use their experience to help other people in the development of their programs. But I don’t know if that’s something that Rare wants people to do because maybe the students [campaign managers] would comment on somebody’s poster and say hey, this is crap, make it better in this way, but then Rare wouldn’t agree with it.”

Daniela and Ian, two non-Rare staff members, seem to define learning on the Club in terms of discussion of substantive issues, particularly around conservation, conservation education, and campaign manager assignments, of which they do not see much evidence on the Club.

Daniela: “It’s a top-down discussion space and sometimes it’s a lateral discussion space, but it’s never really a space to discuss conservation education...I think in terms of learning, strengthening their communications and education capacity as conservation educators, I don’t see a lot of that going on.”

Ian: “How much time do they have to reflect, how many communications between them are engaging with fundamental issues of conservation, that’s a question I’d like to ask. Or is it someone sending out a message saying help me with this particular problem I’m having with the puppets and they get all this advice from other people that is useful helping them in their campaigns. But in terms of that kind of discussing more fundamental issues and reflecting upon the role of the campaign within a wider conservation context, I’m not sure that’s really happening...In terms of learning about conservation and conservation education, I’m not learning much. I would like to see the students [campaign managers] getting much more detailed and perhaps more profound discussions about the issues they are facing, etcetera.”

Daniela also noted that although Rare sometimes defines the Club as a learning network, she doesn’t believe it is being used this way.

Campaign manager survey respondents expressed agreement that sharing is a benefit of the Club, as evidenced in 82% of campaign manager respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the following statement, “The Club allows me to share ideas experiences and information with other Campaign Managers” (table A1). Campaign managers also offered many open-ended statements that confirm sharing as an important benefit of the Club, including the following:

“Sharing knowledge and information, supports.”

“Learned from others’ experiences.”

“Make friends, learn from others.”

“Got the emails from other members and it is like a forum. Information sharing.”

“Link, resource material, communication, help and support from other Rare member.”

“Learning a lot from experiences of other students [campaign managers] and advice from lecturers/supervisors.”

“Working with communities and schools have moved me into another level of work professionally. Working with other stakeholders have also taken a step further - professionally on how to overcome difficult issues at a professional level.”

“To share ideas, information, experiences and constraints.”

“Personally - the sharing of ideas, knowledge and skills with other Rare family members regarding work and activities implemented for the running of the project.”

“The help received from colleagues through the Club helped me to really excel in my campaign work with a distinction. I know the Club links contributed in facilitating the help I received.”

“Information of funding opportunities - lesson learned from other Pride campaign in other part of the world that gives ideas to current work.”

“Learn from other Pride movers different strategies of teaching and getting people involved.”

“Meet new cohort and share the experiences.”

Campaign managers also expressed agreement that the Club provides them with the opportunity to reflect on their own experiences, as shown when 65% of campaign managers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “The Club helps me to think about and process my experiences as a Campaign Manager” (table A1).

How much are campaign managers sharing on the Club, and are they engaging in dialogue about substantive conservation issues, or other types of information? Of the 583 Club messages sampled, 35% (204 messages) contained sharing of information, experience, advice, or ideas. This category includes information that was shared spontaneously (without anyone asking for it), as well as responses to requests for information. Tips from other campaign managers on completing assignments are included here, as are instances when actual files (photos, assignments, links etc.) were sent through the Club.

Sharing on the Club occurred in a variety of ways and centered around a number of different topics: 38 messages included shared photos; 23 messages included sharing related to technology issues and problems (databases, viruses, digital cameras, computer maintenance, etc.); 19 messages contained sharing on campaign materials, such as puppets, posters, stickers, badges, fact sheets, and the production processes for these materials; 17 messages shared assignment instructions and clarifications; 14 included sharing related to funding and money; 12 messages discussed stakeholders; and 11 contained sharing on Flagship species. Other topics that came up less frequently included conservation law; social movements; public speaking; study habits; and the connections between natural disasters, faith and science, to name a few. Following are a few examples of messages in the category of “sharing”:

Subject: Hello from Palau

Posted by [Campaign Manager]

My best advice: Study hard, read your materials, confer with your team and lecturers. Make good use of the library. Learn how to locate books. Read, read, read. This may be the best opportunity to learn a lot before heading home. I do not know if you have better libraries but there's always room for knowledge. Do some exercise when you feel tired or just plain lousy. Otherwise, chill out, drink a beer or visit the Canterbury

Cathedral. I like its history and the architecture. It is a World Heritage site too!

Subject: conservation and religion

Posted by [Campaign Manager]

Hello [Name]. I know that the Bible talks about cleanliness so look for those verses. Yes, religion, conservation, and health do link together because they all relate to our ways of living. Take, for example, dynamiting fish. Dynamiting fish means you destroy everything else in the coral reefs that was made by God for us to benefit from. We need to stop dynamiting to conserve or we will destroy everything that we depend on (coastal living). Health wise, we can get poisoned by the fish that was dynamited. This is all I can say for now. Get concrete examples and they will really get the message across to the people. Keep up the great work.

Subject: RE: Field Assignment

Posted by [Campaign Manager]

So M, what do you really want to test, I mean the methods for collecting data on your bird. Are you doing a sample population count in terms of per hectare through visual observation or will it include capture and release or capture counts, etc. There are many methods for analysing your data if it falls into one or more of those categories and the results are interesting. Historical data is also important for this kind of activity so do some research on the birds. This may apply to [Name] as well on the birds. Try to ask around if work has already been done on your bird. Contact [Name], if you can still remember him and ask him if his organisation Bird Life has information by bird watchers on your target species. That information would be useful baseline for your target species IF available.

Subject: Whitley Award

Posted by Daniela Lerda

Are you nominating your nature conservation project to this award? Why not?

The Whitley Fund for Nature (WFN) is a UK-based charity offering awards to outstanding nature conservation leaders from around the world. The Fund recognises some of the world's most dynamic conservationists and supports projects founded on good science, community involvement and pragmatism.

They are specifically interested in charismatic and passionate individuals who are a voice for environmental sustainability and wildlife conservation in their own countries.

Subject: Factsheet feedback

Posted by Dr Ian Bride

Ian Brides comments on Cohort 3 factsheets. These are simply my constructive criticisms on what I have received. I still need draft factsheet designs from [Name], and [Name] (and a visual of [Name]'s too).

[Name]

Really nice and colourful and simple (a few images and not too much text). My only observation would be that a couple of the items in the "How you can help" section are a bit general. Maybe it would be better to say "Learn about forests etc" – then indicate how/where to do this, and perhaps instead of for more information write "Want to know more? Contact:"

[Name]

Also very colourful – lovely pictures. Perhaps a little imbalance between the text on cover and inside (which seems to be quite a lot).

[Name]

A really well-produced leaflet. Art work on cover is stunning, though there is quite a lot 'going on' – the text at the bottom left looks as though it might be a little difficult to read because of the background (even if I could speak the language!!). Inside, there is a good balance, although the central picture background could have been lightened to reduce the visual effect of it being a big block of blue + text density also looks a little on the high side.

An additional 42 messages included requests for others' knowledge, experience, and advice on a variety of subjects, including technology-related requests, requests for advice on assignments, requests for where to find or how to do something on the Club, inquiries about where and when to get materials for campaign activities, and requests for information and help with particular assignments, such as stakeholder meetings and target conditions.

Subject: Happy New Year!

Posted by Rodney Galama

...to Cohort 1, Q. have you people had any problems with your laptop adaptors? I had problems with mine and was unable to recharge my laptop batteries thus I'm now based at the nearest Internet cafe, for the time being?

Subject: Re: [rarecenter]Keep up the spirit and welcome

Posted by Rosemary Godfrey

Hi Club members! I am sitting in Parkwood Village at the university of Kent - with the new gang! [Names]. They are learning about the RARE Club - and will be writing soon. Here is a message for you from them:

"1. Please send us advice on the tests and assignments!!

2. Please send us cheating seeds!!!

3. Please put a photo of yourself (each of you) into this online club (in photo album called The Gang.) We will put out photos in it too."

Subject: Hello from Palau

Posted by [Campaign Manager]

I wonder what will be your flagship species? I like Sumatran elephants. I always watch wildlife programs from the National Geographic channel and I have seen a program on Sumatran elephants. Is logging and clearing the forest still on-going in your country, village or town? If so, are the elephants losing their habitats because of this practice? So who are the loggers or people in charge? Are the people in the community working for the companies to log and clear the forest and do they know the long term affect of what they are doing?

Information, experience, ideas, and advice are shared and requested in a variety of ways on the Club. 94 sharing messages were sent from campaign managers directed to the entire Club or to specific members; 84 sharing messages were directed from Rare or CI staff to the entire Club or to specific Club members; 24 sharing messages included some sort of auto event reminder; 21 included internet links; 19 involved feedback on an assignment; 17 sharing messages were from lecturers to campaign managers or the entire Club; 14 included electronic files; three included news articles; and two involved online surveys.

Subject: RE: Field Assignment

Posted by [Campaign Manager]

For the manatees in Belize, [Name], I suggest that you read information and links available on this website

<http://www.reef.crc.org.au/aboutreef/coastal/seagrasswatch.html>

This website gives information on the latest developments on seagrass monitoring.

As described above, campaign managers are clearly sharing with each other and with others on the Club. There is evidence that they are sharing about many different topics, related to practical skills, project assignments, and academic topics. It is also apparent that more sharing occurs around the former than the latter two types of information, as campaign managers tend to dialogue more frequently around skill-building topics, such as those related to technology, creating campaign materials, and program management. Discussion happens less often around assignments and academic topics, such as those related to conservation law and population biology.

Learning objectives

What are campaign managers *supposed* to be learning on the Club? There was little clarity about this among interviewees.

Megan: “[Campaign managers are given learning objectives] only in a loose way, and it’s usually portrayed more as a way of getting support and learning from their colleagues and trying to share information.”

Daniela: “I could guess what some [learning objectives] might be but there isn’t really anything very specific going on...it’s not very clear what kind of learning is supposed to be taking place. Is it learning about bigger issues? Is it learning about specific issues for campaigns that are active? Is it information sharing about strategies? I’m not really sure.”

According to Rosemary, the Club exists to help campaign managers with the learning objectives set forth in the validation document for the Diploma in Conservation Education at the University of Kent at Canterbury.

Rosemary: “[The Club] is a tool to facilitate all the other learning objectives...The validation document...gives a summary, an overview of each module as well as specific aims and objectives for each module.”

The official university validation document lists the following aims and objectives for the university training period leading up to the implementation of a Pride campaign.

8.2 Aims

The programme aims to enable students [i.e. campaign managers] to:

- Design and implement conservation education campaigns which promote the conservation of tropical wildlife and habitats,
- Help build local institutional abilities to maintain, replicate and expand Rare Center's programmes independently over the long term, and to positively develop the student's career in the process.

8.3 Objectives

Diplomates should be able to:

- Apply, and use effectively, the skills and understandings developed during the Diploma programme in the context of real-life conservation projects.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a programme of conservation education in achieving its predetermined objectives.
- Communicate effectively, in writing and in person, with:
 - individuals and groups who are the subjects of environmental education campaigns
 - bodies and groups of individuals involved in funding environmental education programmes
 - individuals and groups involved in government and other decision-making processes of environmental protection significance
- Achieve an academic level, and a familiarity with academic study methods, that enables them to progress to study at a degree or master's level.

Specific formal learning objectives for the campaign managers come from seven training modules, six of which are taught during the pre-campaign university program, and one during the post-campaign wrap-up at the university. Campaign managers are required to complete a series of assessed tasks that form part of, and are linked to, six of the seven modules.

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Module 1: | Methods of study: locating and using environmental information in the electronic age (non-assessed module) |
| Module 2: | An introduction to biodiversity |
| Module 3: | Social science approaches to environmental understanding |
| Module 4: | Ecology of habitats & populations |
| Module 5: | Conservation and the law |
| Module 6: | The marketing of conservation |
| Module 7: | Programme review and presentation |

The student campaign managers are required to submit tasks for assessment approximately every two months. The validation document states: “All assessments will require students to demonstrate their ability to translate the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the modules into practice.” Each module contains specific learning aims and objectives, ranging from introducing students to “the fundamental principles and concepts of biodiversity” to promoting “student debate as to the need for a holistic approach to conservation that includes economic empowerment in economically depressed communities.”

Rosemary: “What they do in Kent, what they do in their home countries really has the same learning objectives, but in Kent it’s more academic and in the field it’s seeing how that translates into reality. When they get back to their home countries that academic link is supported by continuing the assessments, the assignments, and they reflect what they’re doing in the field...So the learning objectives are very specific and we have several objectives for each module.”

In addition to the modules are non-assessed workshops “designed to develop and practice transferable skills that they [campaign managers] will need to carry out their CEC [conservation education campaign] work while on placement.” Workshop topics range

from learning to use computers and other equipment to examining environmental education case studies.

To help understand whether or not campaign managers were learning anything through the Club related to formal modules and practical workshops referenced above, I used the aims and objectives outlined in the official university validation document to formulate questions for the campaign manager survey. I separated the questions on learning into three areas: learning skills learning about knowledge topics, and learning related to particular projects.

Table 7 shows that of 18 campaign manager respondents, a majority felt the Club helped them learn skills related to opinion measurement and evaluation (12 respondents, or 67%), and slightly more than half reported that the Club helped them learn skills related to integrating conservation into local school curriculum (10 people, or 56%). A majority of campaign managers felt the Club was either “not applicable” or did not help them learn other skills, such as public speaking, media outreach, using computers to communicate, using the Internet and library resources to conduct quality research, and communicating information to different audiences.

Table 7. Role of Pride Internet Club in learning skills, as perceived by campaign manager survey respondents (N=18)

| | Yes | No | Not Applicable |
|---|----------|---------|----------------|
| Opinion measurement and evaluation (surveys focus groups etc.). | 12 (67%) | 2 (11%) | 4 (22%) |
| Integrating conservation into local school curriculum (lesson plans teacher training etc.). | 10 (55%) | 3 (17%) | 5 (28%) |
| Communicating information to different audiences. | 7 (39%) | 6 (33%) | 5 (28%) |
| Using the internet and library resources to conduct quality research. | 6 (33%) | 7 (39%) | 5 (28%) |
| Using computers to communicate (word processing email etc.). | 6 (33%) | 5 (28%) | 7 (39%) |
| Media outreach (working with journalists the importance of media developing press releases etc.). | 3 (17%) | 6 (33%) | 9 (50%) |
| Public speaking. | 1 (6%) | 9 (50%) | 8 (44%) |

Some campaign managers gave specific examples of skills the Pride Internet Club helped them learn. Learning about surveys, and Survey Pro in particular, was mentioned several times by different people: “How to use Survey Pro and developing questionnaire”; “Rosemary Godfrey outlining Survey Pro”; “Tips for using Survey Pro” and “Information and steps were put in the club on how to do a survey and to measure the success.”

Other campaign managers listed the following examples of skills learned on the Club:

“Integrating conservation into local school, understanding the target communities, focus group discussion and administer questionnaire for community survey. Through discussion, sharing lesson learned and examples.”

“We have learn how to use e-resource and online journals on getting information. That's help me during on writing up my assignment. The club has lots of discussion on survey, focus group. I learned from someone story through club. It's apply during my 1st and 2nd stakeholder meeting.”

“E-mailing to other RARE members enabled me to focus and keep pace at a shorter distance in order to complete work within timeframe. Resources shared amongst members were excellent, was easy although manual was provided, different counterparts will always have something different such as being so creative, energised, visionary and initiate change when working in a different environment.”

In addition to references in each of the above three quotes to sharing and learning skills from others' examples, there were a few separate, specific references:

“Communicate and give out my opinions”; “I learned examples from other people”;

“Sharing skills with others”; “Most of the above were relayed via the Club from respective lecturers/supervisors as well as other students.”

The survey asked respondents to indicate whether or not the Club helped them learn about topics related to conservation. As seen in table 8, of 18 campaign manager respondents, a majority responded that the Club was “not applicable” or specifically did not help them learn about the following topics: national and international laws and conventions affecting wildlife habitat and resource conservation (15 people, or 83%); the principles and concepts of biodiversity (14 people, or 78%); the principles and concepts related to habitat and population ecology (13 people, or 72%); the history and principles of environmental education (12 people, or 67%); approaches to changing people's attitudes and behaviors (11 people, or 61%). There were no learning topics about which I questioned the campaign managers that received a majority “yes” response.

Table 8: Role of Pride Internet Club in learning about conservation topics, as perceived by campaign manager survey respondents (N=18)

| | Yes | No | Not Applicable |
|---|---------|----------|-------------------|
| The principles and concepts of biodiversity. | 4 (22%) | 10 (56%) | 4 (22%) |
| Approaches to changing people's attitudes and behaviors. | 7 (39%) | 7 (39%) | 4 (22%) |
| The history and principles of environmental education. | 6 (33%) | 8 (45%) | 4 (22%) |
| The principles and concepts related to habitat and population ecology. | 5 (28%) | 9 (50%) | 4 (22%) |
| National and international laws and conventions affecting wildlife habitat and resource conservation. | 3 (17%) | 11 (61%) | 4 (22%) |

Some campaign managers who answered “yes” to learning about one or more of the above topics provided the following specific examples. Again, these examples included several references to peer learning, and sharing among Club members as part of the learning process.

“I read materials from colleagues on biodiversity connection for instance and the state of biodiversity. I read other peoples work on field survey methodologies, which gave me ideas of what to do in own case.”

“The learnings from former campaigners are critical for me... to effect change in my target audience.”

“We had assignments about some of these topics, and we submitted drafts, and advice and comments were put on the club, so gained information about the topics from the club by lectures, course manager.”

“Conservation is about people. it might not be the endangered species nor the poisonous that some of these species carry. It’s about educating these humans to stop the destruction that has already polluted the environment. It is a complex issue and therefore, awareness raising is important to give

a people ideal of change in change in their attitude and behaviour and be actively involved.”

“Social science helped a lot in understanding the basic knowledge on changing people perception on attitude-knowledge and behaviour in working with local community and educate them in term of marine conservation knowledge.”

“Bob Smith explaining about the Principles and concepts related to habitat and population ecology.”

The survey also queried campaign managers about their use of the Club for specific projects. As shown in table 9, of 18 campaign manager respondents, a majority (10 people, or 56%) reported that the Club helped them with designing an appropriate environmental education strategy for a Pride Campaign; half of the respondents (9 people, 50%) reported the Club helped them with designing and implementing a field-based social marketing campaign; and half reported it helped them to produce effective marketing materials for an outreach campaign. A majority reported that the club was “not applicable” or did not help them with the following projects: conducting research and writing a scientific paper about a flagship species (12 people, or 67%); creating a brochure or critical summary of conservation legislation in a specific country (12 people, or 67%); choosing an appropriate flagship species for a Pride Campaign (11 people, or 61%).

Table 9: Role of Pride Internet Club in learning about projects, as perceived by campaign manager survey respondents (N=18)

| | Yes | No | Not Applicable |
|--|----------|---------|-------------------|
| Designing an appropriate environmental education strategy for a Pride Campaign. | 10 (56%) | 4 (22%) | 4 (22%) |
| Designing and implementing a field-based social marketing campaign. | 9 (50%) | 3 (17%) | 6 (33%) |
| Producing effective marketing materials for an outreach campaign (badges stickers sermons etc.). | 9 (50%) | 3 (17%) | 6 (33%) |
| Choosing an appropriate flagship species for a Pride Campaign. | 7 (39%) | 7 (39%) | 4 (22%) |
| Conducting research and writing a scientific paper about a flagship species. | 6 (33%) | 8 (44%) | 4 (22%) |
| Creating a brochure or critical summary of conservation legislation in a specific country. | 6 (33%) | 8 (44%) | 4 (22%) |

Campaign managers who reported that the Club did help them with one or more projects provided examples, such as designing printed materials and developing community conservation programs. One respondent credited Rare in general and the Club in particular with the success of their project:

“RARE is very tremendous I must say. With all Pride Manuals and technical assistance provided, my project was a success. The pride internet club assisted in many ways from motivation, change in attitude and behaviours of different communities and schools we went through, change have been notified, and all these has resulted in achieving our SMART [Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-bound] objectives.”

Again, several campaign managers noted that others’ shared experiences and examples helped them with various projects. For instance, one said: “With sharing information and

past experiences of former PRIDE campaigners, the club has in any way helped structure designs and plans for my campaign such that it will effectively impact changes.” There is some evidence that campaign managers feel the Club helps with their assignments. In response to the statement, “The Club helps me to complete my assignments,” campaign managers had mixed opinions: 41% agreed or strongly agreed and 35% disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (table A1).

If Rare is most concerned that campaign managers engage in deep, comprehensive discussions on substantive topics related to conservation education that assist them in their academic assignments, it does not appear from the above findings that the Club is very successful in terms of this type of interaction. If instead, Rare is more interested in creating a successful learning environment that supports an active process of creating, as opposed to acquiring, knowledge, there is substantial evidence of constructivist and participatory learning processes (such as peer-to-peer learning, reflection, learner-centeredness, and multiple perspectives) occurring on the Club.

Cost, convenience, and helping Rare achieve its organizational mission

In addition to the benefits of the Club described above (facilitating communication, fostering community, managing information, and supporting learning), there were three other benefits mentioned by Club members: cost, convenience, and helping Rare achieve its organizational mission. Three Rare staff members mentioned its low cost as a benefit of the Club, a topic not discussed as one of the original Club goals. Rosemary also noted convenience as a benefit.

Paul: “[Using the Internet] is much much cheaper than using the phone...The Club costs us nothing.”

Rosemary: “The cost side of it, for a low-cost means of communication it’s great...I think the club is useful for dealing with people who are in different parts of the world at different times...It’s easy to use.”

Megan: “The huge benefit for us is that it’s free.”

Two interviewees said that the Club also benefits Rare as an organization because it helps staff understand the problems and issues that campaign managers face on the ground, and because the Club supports the campaign managers in achieving the mission and objectives set forth by Rare. This type of organizational learning was described in the following quotations:

Megan: “We get Pride campaigns and a Pride campaign community out of it... Some of the club communications have helped us understand the problems that they face implementing the campaigns...To understand a little bit more their realities on the ground, I think the club helps keep us connected that way.”

Rosemary: “I think, one of the way Rare measures its success is by how successful its partners are in the field, that’s what we are working toward, supporting their objectives and their missions, and I think the club is just helping facilitate that...Anything Rare can do to help the Pride campaigners better is helping Rare.”

Campaign managers surveyed expressed agreement that they are helping to fulfill Pride’s mission in the Club, with 71% of campaign managers responding that they agree or strongly agree with the statement, “The Club helps Pride to fulfill its long-term strategy and mission” (table A1). Two Rare staff and one campaign manager mentioned that the Club specifically aids in achieving Pride’s conservation education objectives:

Rosemary: “[The Club is] helping some of [Rare’s] key staff in doing this Pride campaign to really improve their knowledge and do conservation education better.”

Megan: “We as an organization are trying to catalyze this global constituency for environmental education and so how you get a community-based education program that is inherently local in nature to

be part of a bigger movement, that is a fundamental mission and long-term strategy for Pride in the next ten years, so this is a way we can help get there, so it is helping fulfill our mission as a program.”

Campaign manager: “I have used many conservation education information and materials that have been of immense professional help to me, which I received through the Pride Internet club.”

Challenges

In general during the interviews, Rare staff members Rosemary, Megan, and Paul tended to report more and greater benefits of the Club for campaign managers and themselves individually than CI staff member Daniela and university lecturers Bob and Ian. Conversely, all of the interviewees reported a variety of challenges with the Club, including: technical problems; human error; lack of participation and privacy; Rare’s “culture of positivity”; lack of time; non-Club communications; the need for “animation” or moderation on the Club; and unclear roles, objectives, expectations, and instructions for using the Club.

Technical problems

Each of the six interviewees said that technical problems are a challenge with the Club, and they mentioned technical problems (particularly slow internet connections, or lack of internet access) more frequently than any other problem with the Club.

Bob: “The students [campaign managers] have a hard time getting on the Club.”

Paul: “Access to the Internet and speed of access...if Internet dialup is extremely slow then it makes downloading files or uploading photographs almost impossible.”

Megan: “There’s technical difficulties, certainly with dial-up connections.”

Daniela: "From the feedback I've gotten from students [campaign managers] they find it not a very friendly format to use because of the download time...if you're using dial-up and you have a slow connection it's a huge pain and people get very discouraged from using it that way."

Two interviewees mentioned specific problems with Yahoo! and/or Hotmail accounts.

The campaign managers echoed these problems in their survey responses. Ten of the 18 campaign managers surveyed (56%) reported having problems or difficulties with the Club, including no, slow or erratic internet connections, firewalls, Hotmail account problems, electrical failures, cost of Internet access, and problems sending attachments through the Club, as evidenced in the following quotations:

"It has sometime been very difficult for me to access the club as frequently as I would like to. But this is because of the very slow Internet connection and some time failure in electricity. Because of the slowness of the net, I mostly just prefer to read or receive my mails quickly before any surprise failure happens. It is expensive here to stay too long on the net."

"Takes long time to open/access the club because the speed/technology of Internet in my country/at the site."

In addition, 65% of campaign managers stated that they agree or strongly agree with the statement, "I experience technical problems with the Club (long download time etc.)" (table A1). It is of course also possible that those campaign managers who did not respond to the survey are likely to have more technical problems than those who did respond.

Two interviewees mentioned frustrations on the part of campaign managers who experience technical problems such as slow connections or no access to the Club as a challenge. This particular problem seems to cause additional difficulties, in that Rare is hesitant to increase moderating on the Club or require more member participation if not everyone has equal access to the Club.

Paul: “We recognize that some students [campaign managers] cannot use it, therefore you cannot make it compulsory... I think it would be great if we could have more moderated discussions using it, but then I think the frustration would build for those who don’t have access to it.”

Ian: “And I’m not sure that the club, for those that don’t [have access to it], may almost intimidate them at some level. There’s a sense that all the other people can do it and access it and they can’t. I don’t know if individuals feel left to one side or outside of it.”

There is some evidence that campaign managers with infrequent or no access to the Club worry about missing information. When asked how much they agreed with the statement, “I worry that I am missing important information if I am not able to access the Club frequently,” 47% of campaign managers replied that they agreed or strongly agreed. More campaign managers (53%) replied that they were neutral about the statement, or that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with it.

Human error

Four out of six interviewees mentioned human error as a challenge with the Club, including misunderstandings about how to access the site, forgotten passwords, posting to the wrong address, and simply forgetting about the Club entirely. There are different methods of accessing messages posted to the Club: one involves going into the Club itself to post and/or retrieve messages, the other involves changing the settings to receive emails in one’s inbox, for the most part eliminating the need for going onto the Club and cutting down on internet time.

Megan: “A lot of [the campaign managers] don’t understand...that you can set your settings to just get the messages automatically, or you can just go into the club and check. [Campaign managers] thought they had to be able to get into the site... somehow that concept wasn’t clearly presented at first.”

Rosemary: "One of the problems is that people think they have to be on the club online, but what we need to get better at, and what I need to point out better is making sure they can just link it up with outlook express so they can just download the messages really quickly and look at them and read them offline."

Even some staff members do not understand both methods for posting and retrieving messages.

Daniela: "In order for you to send a message to the club you have to go into a website and then send a club message, you don't just use your email, it's not like a listserv that you put in the address and it goes to everybody, you actually have to send messages through the club."

Club members have also often posted messages to the wrong address.

Megan: "They have managed to get that wrong a lot. I've gotten a lot of emails from people who think they are sending it to the Club and they're not, including Rare staff."

Ian: "I've made a couple of mistakes at times where I've got a club message from...a particular individual, and I've made the mistake of replying, at times have replied to that particular individual, and have ended up replying to all the club."

In one case posting to the wrong address caused additional problems when, according to Megan, one of the lecturers "inadvertently posted everyone's grades on an assignment." Megan also noted that sometimes Club members forget the Club exists at all.

Lack of participation and privacy concerns

Lack of participation is a challenge mentioned by several interviewees, and may be a result of other challenges listed in this section. As Rosemary acknowledged, some of the campaign managers "don't use it very much." Bob related lack of participation to the lack of privacy on the Club, and in particular, the fact that campaign managers might worry about others seeing their grades. Two additional interviewees mentioned the public format of the Club, and/or it's lack of privacy as a challenge.

Rosemary: “One of the downsides of the club is that you don’t want everything to go up there, I mean you don’t want every message you send to someone to be seen...personal things, sensitive things, they all really hate this assignment or whatever...it’s not really private, and that’s fine, it’s not really a downside. It’s a public place to chat and share information.”

Bob: “Many of them don’t come from a university setting and are a bit overwhelmed when they first begin...they will email me individually if they have problems so I know they have questions, but I think it’s difficult for them to ask the whole group. They get worried about their grades and certainly don’t want others to see those.”

There is not much evidence to support the idea that campaign managers feel intimidated about posting messages on the Club, or that they worry about their postings affecting their grades. Only twelve percent (12%) of campaign managers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I feel intimidated about posting messages on the Club.” Zero percent (0%) of campaign managers responded that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I worry that things I post on the Club may negatively impact my grades.” Of course, those who did not respond to the survey may be the same people who are less likely to participate in the Club for whatever reason.

Culture of positivity

Rosemary faulted the public nature of the Club for creating another challenge: the fact that people tend to post only positive information on the Club.

“I think a lot of the time people tend to put positive things up on the club, because it is public and it’s really not the place where they want to air their problems, so I suppose it has its limitations. It’s not anonymous...Some of it has to do with confidence. I know there are a lot of people reading it and they think, wow I don’t want to put it up unless it’s great...I think sometimes they think that whatever goes up on the club has got to be really fantastic advice.”

Ian, a lecturer at the University of Kent, echoed this sentiment in a comment about Rare as an organization:

Ian: “There’s a culture within the Rare program that everything is hunky dory. It’s all part of this creating a family atmosphere, but it’s a double-edged sword really because it’s not a true family in which we have arguments and everything, so I’m not sure how much criticism you’d be able to get out of the students [campaign managers] themselves.”

Other communication methods

Other communication methods pose an additional challenge to the Club, as members communicate with each other via phone, email, instant messenger, Skype, or other media, which can sometimes be more private and/or more convenient to use, and which may not provide members with the same benefits as the Club. As interviewees explained:

Paul: “The trouble of course is to continue encouraging them to use the club as opposed to simply emailing or using MSN or even now Skype, where sometimes it’s quicker for them to go onto MSN messenger and talk directly.”

Megan: “I know there are little subgroups within all the [campaign managers] and they spend a lot of time instant messaging each other back and forth.”

Daniela: “They are encouraged to communicate through the club [but] most of the communication happens outside of the club.”

Rosemary: “There’s lots of really useful advice that’s not going through the club, it’s going from the Pride team to the Pride campaigners...by the Pride team I mean myself, the lecturers, Megan, Daniela (supporting the CEPF funded projects), so I think there’s a lot of advice going out that’s being used by that individual, useful, but not being seen by others.”

As shown in table 10, each of the 18 campaign managers surveyed reported using methods other than the Pride Internet Club to communicate with other campaign managers, as well as Pride staff and lecturers. Email use was reported by all 18 campaign managers, although frequency of use varied from once or more per day to less than once

per month. Fourteen of the 18 campaign manager respondents reported using the telephone and instant messenger to communicate. Eight campaign managers reported using Skype, a free global Internet telephony company.

Table 10: Frequency of non-Club communication (N=18)

| | Once or more per day | A few times per week | A few times per month | Less than once per month | Never |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|
| Telephone | 1 | 1 | 1 | 11 | 4 |
| Email | 4 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| MSN (or other instant messenger) | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| Skype | 0 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 10 |

In addition, 22 of the actual Club messages included references to using other forms of communication. These messages were often for planning future communications off the Club or encouraging/inviting others (even by Rare staff) to use other forms of communication such as email, MSN, or Skype.

Subject: Hello from [Name]

Posted by Paul Butler

[Name]

Keep up great work. [Name] speaks very highly of you. Are you on msn messenger. Please get on it or if you are give me you address, so we can all chat... I have SIX students on right now. Sign up when you can they all want to talk to you.

Each of the six interviewees mentioned that people communicate outside the Club to discuss sensitive, personal issues, because they are shy, or because the Club isn't the place for sharing all kinds of information.

Rosemary: “Not everything goes through the club. Because sometimes it is sensitive or sometimes people don’t want to see ten different reiterations of a poster but they might just want to see one or two. So there’s a lot of communication outside the club... It’s a balance. I wouldn’t want that all to go up. I think it might be a bit swamped; it might devalue the club.”

Bob: “Many of them are shy and don’t want to send out to the entire group.”

Megan: “Because our individual communications with them tend to be much more just about their campaign and where they need support but then when we end up communicating with them through the club they are often communicating more issues that are probably more relevant for everyone, like just about their general life or the bigger picture of their campaign that they are sharing with their colleagues. So it’s almost a different kind of communication than what we would have with them individually.”

Although the lecturers have been asked by Rare staff to communicate with campaign managers on the Club, there are still times when individual communication is preferred, or necessary.

Bob: “The [campaign managers] have a hard time getting on the club, but they send me individual emails, and I’m supposed to put that information on the club for everyone to see, but I do it in a way that I write a general message with the information in it so people can’t tell who I was talking to or what they asked me.”

Ian: “I’ve been asked to communicate with the students [campaign managers] through the club. A couple of students I have...exchanged confidences with, in which case I have communicated with them directly through emails.”

Paul noted that the problem occurs when Rare wants to be able to track communication between campaign managers, Rare staff, and lecturers, but is unable to because communication isn’t happening on the Club.

Paul: “We can’t monitor usage of those chats, nor can we monitor when they’re sending emails to one another other than self reporting and one of the mechanisms we wanted to do was to have the ability to track how many messages, so that’s an area where we run into some kind of problem.

Rosemary: “Sometimes [individual feedback] goes through the club and sometimes it doesn’t... I think there’s lots of really useful advice that’s not going through the club, it’s going from the Pride team to the Pride campaigners.”

At the same time, Rare acknowledges the difficulties in limiting communication, and even encourages outside communication to some extent.

Paul: “If there is something very personal, we encourage [them to communicate outside the Club]....If they have an issue then obviously we want them to have the freedom to do it in confidence.”

Rosemary: “We don’t need to always monitor what everyone is doing”

Lack of time

Two interviewees mentioned lack of time as a challenge on the Club, for campaign managers as well as for lecturers. Paul explained that campaign managers “Don’t have a lot of time to sit there doing it because they work very, very, very, very hard in the field.” Ian also noted how lack of time, and in particular lack of time for reflection, is a challenge for the Club, and for the campaign managers in general.

Ian: “It’s bloody hard work for the students, grueling. Sometimes I feel that the students get into a process of getting through the assignments and the activities rather than taking the time to engage with and think about the underlying issues, I mean it’s a problem that all students face in an educational situation where they’re being evaluated. It’s a compromise faced by being the Rare campaign in an academic milieu.”

Campaign managers seem to agree, rather weakly, that they lack time for the Club, as evidenced in 59% of campaign managers agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement, “I do not have enough time to use the Club.”

Need for “animation” or moderation on the Club

Two interviewees mentioned that purposeful animation or stimulation of the Club is important and should occur more often, but they did not say who should take on this role.

Megan: “I think we try to stimulate every once in a while...please share your experiences sort of thing, but I wouldn’t say its anyone’s job. It’s certainly not planned...It does take a certain amount of stimulus to keep people participating and I think if we stopped it would go down, and I think you could probably tie those two together.”

Daniela: “There is no real moderating...there’s no censorship on it, but there also isn’t any animation...from studying the types of networks that are out there and that exist and understanding what the role of a moderator is in a virtual network, I don’t think that Rare has thought about that role being given to somebody...It’s more like, here’s the space, use it. But it’s not, what’s it for, do you want to use it, are you interested or is it useful to you or anything like that.”

Unclear roles, objectives, expectations, and instructions for using the Club

CI staff member Daniela felt that the Club is not being used to its full potential. “I don’t get a lot out of the club, again, because I don’t think it’s utilized very well. Its not that the club is a useless thing, I just think that it is not utilized to its full potential.” Her reasoning for this seems to center on the lack of clear objectives, expectations, and instructions for using the Club.

Daniela: “It’s not specific what it’s to be used for now. Right now it serves as a pop-up calendar. Happy birthdays or as a way to email everybody or a distribution list... It should be something that serves the network and not just Rare as a way to remind them of assignments or deadlines or monthly reports or whatever...It’s almost like there are too many options and it’s not very clear what those options are for...I don’t find the space very friendly. Its not a space that invites you to use it. And the fact that it’s not very clear what is expected of the space, what exactly we’re supposed to be using it for makes it very hard to do anything very clear with it?... I don’t find the space very friendly but maybe it’s because I haven’t been

introduced to how it's expected to be used, it's just something that exists and it's there and not really utilized.... It's more like, here's the space, use it. But it's not what for, do you want to use it, are you interested or is it useful to you or anything like that."

The two lecturers mentioned information overload as a challenge, and in particular, the large number of happy birthday messages on the Club. For example:

Ian: "I have found it a bit stressing when you go in and you see there's lots of messages and lots of stuff there... Sometimes I wonder that the main purpose isn't wishing everybody happy birthday,"

Using the Club is a topic that is covered in module 6 while the campaign managers are in Kent. For instance, interviewees noted:

Paul: "They are encouraged to file reports on the club, things they want to share, photographs, experiences on the club, the lecturers are encouraged to use the club as well."

Megan: "We try to ask them to submit their assignments through the club...ask them to submit their monthly reports so they can share it with their friends, colleagues, to submit photos that they can share, so it is pitched to them as a tool for their work... It's usually portrayed more as a way of getting support and learning from their colleagues, and trying to share information."

Two interviewees noted that there are no real written-down expectations and instructions for using the Club. Rosemary: "It's all given verbally and we don't say what they can't use it for. We like to make them feel that it's something that is fun and useful to them." People had differing opinions about the need for clarity and clearer instructions for the Club. The two lecturers felt they didn't need much information, while Daniela seemed less comfortable with having no formal instructions. In the survey, 76% of campaign managers agreed with the statement, "I received enough training on how to use the Club," (table A1). One campaign manager in the survey specifically stated that he or she does

not know the full potential of the Club: “I only use the e-mail service. I do not know what else is available.”

Future of the Club: Solutions and suggestions

According to Rosemary, the Club is “not just for now while [the campaign managers] are getting their diploma, it’s for the future as friends and conservation colleagues.” She noted, “We hope they’ll still be on the Club and using it in ten, twenty, thirty or more years time as their conservation careers develop.” From my conversations with Rare staff during and outside of interviews, they are eager to change and improve the Club to benefit its members, now and in the future. For instance, both Rosemary and Paul said they feel learning more about what has worked and not worked on the Club for the campaign managers will help improve it.

Rosemary: “I think we have to learn more about what didn’t work...I think you’d have to really ask the students...it would be really really interesting to hear their views on it, and then use those to make it better, more of what they need and less of what they don’t need, whatever that is.”

Paul: “[We need] an understanding of how it is being used and how the students themselves feel.”

This section outlines a variety of ideas for improving the Club, suggested by Rare/CI staff, lecturers, and campaign managers. Many of these solutions are similar to the categories outlined above in the “Challenges” section of this chapter. They include: solutions to technical problems; increased learning; moderated discussions; stimulation and encouragement to use the Club; less “culture of positivity”; increased organization and functionality; improved instructions; and linking the English and Spanish Clubs.

Solutions to technical problems

Three of the six interviewees mentioned a desire to fix technical problems in order to improve the Club, but also expressed frustration at the lack of actual solutions to some of the more frequent problems, such as slow internet connections. Other technical issues might be improved with better instructions about Club use for its members.

Paul: “Short of setting their country up with Internet, what can you do? Provide them with a satellite dish or something? There’s not much we can do about it, though they may be frustrated.”

Megan: “I wish there were a way we could address some of these more technical issues.”

Rosemary: “I think we need to find better email suppliers, instead of hotmail yahoo... what I need to point out better is making sure they can just link it up with outlook express so they can just download the messages really quickly and look at them and read them offline.”

Campaign managers echoed this sentiment in the survey, stating, “Access to e-mail facility and improvement in the internet speed is important for me”; “Increase internet connections at respective sites”; and “Downloading time is a major issue depending on the country.”

Increased learning

Five of the interviewees and one campaign manager mentioned a desire to increase the amount of formal learning on the Club, defined as more sharing and “profound discussions.”

Rosemary: “I think there could be more learning between the current campaigners...I’d like to see more of what the students [campaign managers] say to use and our feedback to them going through the Club.”

Ian: “I would like to see the students getting much more detailed and perhaps more profound discussions about the issues they are facing.”

Megan: “We’d like to do some online teaching sessions from a distance that you can do with blackboard, and where you can work on documents and work on things back and forth... it’s definitely in my plans to try to figure out some kind of software like blackboard that is more instructional...It’s very passive and I would like something more interactive.”

Daniela: “A lot of times when the new students are developing a poster, for instance, we send them a poster that we think was particularly well done for a place that’s dealing with similar issues and we say hey, look at what this person did and how they explained these things visually through a poster, how about something like this?...I think if those things were there that people would take the time to look at them.”

Paul: “The way we’d like it done is that they would send it to the club so that they’d say, I’m doing a school visit tomorrow, anybody got any ideas? What we’d like to see is that they’d send it to the club, people would check into the club regularly, and people would then respond....I think we need to encourage [this]... the exchange of substantive messages of sort of, hey do you want to see my fact sheet? Let me scan it and put it on the club.”

Megan and one of the campaign managers mentioned online lecturers as a way to increase learning.

Campaign manager: “Better if the lectures of each subject that we have during the pre-campaign (University time) could provide an online lecture, on related subject once a month.”

Moderated discussions

Paul and Daniela expressed a desire for moderated discussions. Daniela in particular envisioned moderating, as well as clear and specific goals, objectives, and directives that are agreed upon by all members as a way to foster substantive discussions.

Daniela: “Well, you need a moderator... There have to be specific goals and objectives and things that people are working towards and directives that people are commenting on, let’s say this month or this week we’re going to be discussing best strategies for working with adults, and then people are contributing toward something very specific, and they know what they are trying to get to...For the club to be improved you would

need a moderator: someone who's tasked with making the club alive, keeping it alive, sending people things that are specific, and I think those decisions need to be made...by the members who are part of the network. What would be the things that the club could support them with? What would be the ways that the club could serve them? I don't think those questions have ever been asked. I think that people need to have common goals and objectives that are clear to them, that are agreed upon."

Paul also mentioned a desire for moderated discussions, but acknowledged this might cause other kinds of problems.

Paul: "I think it would be great if we could have more moderated discussions using it, but then I think the frustration would build for those who don't have access to it."

Stimulation and encouragement to use the Club

Four of the six interviewees mentioned increased stimulation of the Club or encouragement to use the Club as a way to improve it.

Megan: "We could probably do a better job of...stimulating [the Club]."

Rosemary: "Perhaps a prize each month for the best lesson learned that they could share on the club, so that people would actually take the time to spend an hour, or half an hour really, writing something to share with people. I think we just need to encourage them somehow to do that."

Paul: "Encouraging it and congratulating them for using it."

Campaign manager: "We should use it more often."

Less "culture of positivity"

Rosemary mentioned encouraging campaign managers to use the Club for all types of experiences, not just those that are fun and positive, as a way to improve the Club.

Rosemary: "We have to perhaps encourage campaigners to use the club even if what they're putting up isn't perhaps all about a great successful outcome, we want to hear more about the struggles they're having."

Increased organization and functionality

Three interviewees mentioned the Club could be improved by increasing its organization and functionality.

Megan: “I’d like to see if there isn’t a way to increase the functionality of the club, so it’s not just a storage site.”

Rosemary: “I think we need to say perhaps, towards the end of a string of advice to put up a summary of it that people can benefit from, perhaps that’s something I could do more. “

Ian: “Somebody needs to clear off a lot of the garbage...it’s at a point of growth where it needs to be a bit better organized perhaps... Sometimes we suffer from too much information, having all the information on there doesn’t benefit us very much more... It’s a question of whether people are actually going to access it or use it or feel intimidated by the fact that it’s a there or whatever. I’d like to see it tidied up.”

One campaign manager suggested, “Easy link, better layout and colour” as a way to improve the Club. And only simply noted that the Club, “Looks boring.”

Improved instructions

Daniela suggested the Club might be improved if members were “told how to use it better other than just posting messages and replying to messages.” One campaign manager also mentioned this improvement, requesting, “Training on how to use the club and what is available.”

Link Spanish and English Clubs

One interviewee, Paul, noted that the Club could be improved by somehow linking the Spanish and English clubs together.

“Generally, I think it’s a good thing”

Among discussions of ways to improve the Club, some of the Club members made a point to mention that, although it isn’t perfect, they do also like the Club how it is now.

Bob: “Honestly I think it’s the best that it could really be right now... I don’t think it would be a good idea to separate the social part of it from the other part, because I think it’s good for the students.”

Ian: “Generally I think it’s a good thing.”

Rosemary: “It’s a great tool but it’s [not] a magic wand and it’s [not] gonna resolve everything.”

Megan: “I think the Club will stick around.”

Conclusion

This chapter outlined all of the major research findings of my thesis, organized into six sections:

- 1) Rare’s goals for the Pride Internet Club
- 2) Findings related to who “owns” the Club and how much different member groups are using it
- 3) A discussion of how its members are using the Club (for what purposes);
- 4) Identified benefits of the Club
- 5) Challenges that the Club faces in meeting its goals, and
- 6) The future of the Club, including solutions and suggestions for how it might be changed and improved.

In section 1, findings showed that although there were no official Club goals, informal goals included: 1) the Club is a tool for facilitating communication, which serves the following other goals: 2) fostering community, 3) managing information, and 4) supporting learning. Section two illustrated that campaign managers do feel ownership over the Club, but individually are not using it as frequently as other Club members, in

particular Rare staff. Various reasons for lack of participation were discussed, including insufficient time to use the Club and privacy concerns. Section three showed that campaign manager members are using a variety of different functions of the Club; in addition, Rare staff reported they are using the Club primarily for communicating information, management, and encouragement. Section four outlined benefits of the Club, most of which aligned closely with the Club's original, informal, goals: facilitating communication, fostering community, managing information, and supporting learning. Three additional benefits of cost, convenience, and helping Rare achieve its organizational mission were also discussed.

Challenges, and possible solutions to the challenges, were described in sections five and six. The various challenges centered around the following categories: technical problems, human error, lack of participation and privacy concerns, culture of positivity, use of other communication methods, lack of time, the need for "animation" or moderation on the Club, and unclear roles, objectives, expectations, and instructions for using the Club. Respondents' suggestions for the future of the Club aligned closely with many of its challenges and included: solutions to technical problems, increased learning, moderated discussions, stimulation and encouragement to use the Club, less "culture of positivity," increased organization and functionality, improved instructions, and linking the Spanish and English Clubs. Interviewees also noted that, generally, they like the Club and think, "it's a good thing." The next and final chapter discusses the importance of these findings to the original research question, "What is the potential for computer-mediated communication to enhance learning in conservation education?"

CHAPTER FIVE

CREATING A SUCCESSFUL CONSTRUCTIVIST LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In a traditional learning environment, instructors decide just what learners need to know, the behaviors that are appropriate for achieving their objectives, and the context in which their activities will be evaluated. Such artificial situations foster a dependence on the instructor, and as a result, learners are not prepared to function independently in complex situations with ill-defined problems (Sherry and Meyers 1998: 9-10).

Rare's mission is "to protect wildlands of globally significant biodiversity by enabling local people to benefit from their preservation." This lofty goal is in part tackled by the Rare Pride program, which uses "innovative approaches to achieving conservation results through community-based education" (Rare 2006). The heart of the Pride program is its campaign managers, whom Rare trains to be catalysts of change in the communities in which they work and live. Campaign managers are charged with the task of inspiring others to change their attitudes and behaviors toward the environment—not an easy undertaking to say the least. To help them become more successful in their conservation work, Rare provides the campaign managers with different types of support, among them the Pride Internet Club, a computer-mediated environment that connects campaign managers, Rare staff, university lecturers, and Rare Pride partners who are physically located in countries all around the globe.

The aim of this research project was to understand if, what, and how Pride's campaign managers are learning on the Club. Keeping in mind the original research question, my objectives for this thesis were to:

- 1) Identify what campaign managers are learning on the Club with respect to conservation education;
- 2) Understand the process by which campaign managers are learning within the Club;
- 3) Determine the members' goals and objectives for the Club to understand whether or not these, or other unanticipated goals and objectives, are being met within the Club;
- 4) Understand what implications the findings have for the individual Club members and for Rare as an organization;
- 5) Provide recommendations to Rare on how the Club might be improved to better meet its members' goals, and
- 6) Share what is learned with the Club's members and others in the fields of environmental conservation and education.

This final chapter includes a reminder of the methods and limitations of my study; a summary of the major research findings and their relevance in the context of learning; suggestions of areas for further research; recommendations for Rare as to how the organization might change the Pride Internet Club to become a more successful learning environment for the campaign managers; and implications for the broader fields of education and environmental conservation.

Methods and Limitations

In order to answer the research question, "What is the potential for computer-mediated communication to enhance learning in conservation education?" I relied on multiple data collection methods: interviews with key Rare and CI staff and university lecturers, a survey of campaign manager members of the Club, and analysis of the Club messages themselves. A strength of this approach is that I was able to gain three different, yet important, perspectives on the Club, each of which was instrumental in developing my understanding. Of course, the Club is just one part of how campaign managers are learning through the Pride program, and this research does not help illuminate what they are getting from the rest of the process.

Findings within the context of learning

Although not much planning went into creating the Club, interviewees were able to identify four informal Club goals: facilitating communication, fostering community, managing information, and supporting learning. How successful was the Club in meeting these goals? The research findings left no doubt that the Club is serving as a tool for communication; and in fact, communication is seen as one of the major benefits of the Club by its members. The Club is also quite successful at fostering a sense of community among campaign managers and others in the “Rare family,” in particular through the building of friendships, social support, professional contacts, and by helping to combat feelings of isolation. The Club is also succeeding somewhat in helping its members manage information by providing a space to store files and photos, and by allowing the posting of informational messages that help keep Pride program participants on track. The fourth goal, supporting learning, is of most interest in this study and is discussed in more detail below.

Conservation, Constructivism, and CMC

Constructivist learning theory has made us aware that people learn through the construction of knowledge. Constructivism supposes, “*all* learning environments are constructivist, whether intentionally or otherwise” (Boethel and Dimock 1999:11), and the question therefore is “whether the construction enables or distorts” learning (Lewin 1995:431-432). A successful constructivist learning environment is one that is learner-driven, and which involves key ingredients like social interaction, reflection, understanding prior knowledge and beliefs, the role of the teacher as “facilitator,” and access to multiple perspectives, among others.

The Club is not a complicated tool compared to many instructional technologies, but existing literature suggests that computer-mediated environments can support constructivist learning, as described by Boethel and Dimock (1999:26):

When technology is used as a tool for learning, rather than the object of instruction or as the instructor, it can assist teachers as they strive to uncover students' prior knowledge, understanding and beliefs; tap into student interests and provide increased motivation for learning; base instruction on the posing of problems; provide a variety of experiences, experimentation, and negotiation of meaning; increase the complexity of the content; take on the role of facilitator; increase the ability of students to test multiple scenarios and this challenge preconceived notions or misconceptions; increase the authenticity of the content and context; and broaden the circle of social interaction to include students' peers and experts beyond the classroom, the school, the community, and even their home country.

Current research on learning and CMC (computer-mediated communication) helps inform learning on the Pride Internet Club.

Learning on the Pride Internet Club

Not all of the Rare Pride staff members interviewed agreed that significant learning occurs on the Club, in part because members have different expectations for what kinds of learning should be occur. It is not clear the Club is aiding campaign managers in learning about the specific knowledge topics laid out in the Pride university validation document. In addition, although some campaign managers reported that the Club helped them complete their formal assignments, more campaign managers stated that the Club helps them learn practical and project-oriented skills.

The success of the Club can only be judged against Rare's goals for it. The Club does not appear to foster deep comprehensive discussions on substantive topics related to conservation education and academic assignments. If this is a paramount goal, then the

Club is not serving it well. If Rare is interested in creating a successful learning environment, supporting an active process of creating, as opposed to acquiring knowledge, the Club appears to be succeeding. Campaign managers do in fact seem to be learning—they just aren't necessarily learning what Rare might want them to.

Asking questions and posing problems

The Club does seem to be, to a large extent, learner-driven. Although they may not feel entirely that the Club “belongs to them,” campaign managers frequently ask for and give advice on topics that are important to them, which tend toward the practical, skill-based side of conservation education (making campaign materials, understanding how to use technologies, finding funding, etc.). It seems important to Rare that a sense of ownership on the part of the campaign managers continue to grow, as it allows for maximum connection and community-building on the Club. Yet, there is also interest on the part of the organization in introducing more formal learning and substantive discussions on academic topics. This dilemma is not uncommon in constructivist-supported learning environments, and can be addressed, not through the introduction of classroom-type lectures posted online, but through the posing of questions and problems that “uncover students’ understandings and methods of reasoning; providing adequate time for in-depth dialogue; and helping students to feel comfortable in revealing their existing ideas” (Boethel and Dimock 1999:12).

One of the key principles of constructivism is the idea that humans construct our own realities. Constructivists propose that knowledge is constructed by the learner, uniquely and individually, “in multiple ways, through a variety of authentic tools, resources, experiences, and contexts” (SEDL 1998:1). Understanding students’ prior

conceptions is an important component of creating a learning environment that enables knowledge construction. Instructors should begin the learning process by “Listening to students and observing the ways in which they go about solving problems” (Boethel and Dimock 1999:11). There does not seem to be purposeful probing of campaign managers’ prior knowledge and beliefs on the Club by Pride staff and lecturers. To better understand the student campaign managers’ prior conceptions, Rare might consider prompting online discussions to encourage dialogue and group problem-solving. Raising questions and posing relevant problems can help campaign managers begin to understand their own beliefs and methods of reasoning, as well as those of other Club members, prior to the introduction of new concepts or curriculum by lecturers or Rare staff.

Social interaction: The introduction of multiple perspectives

Certainly, the social nature of the Club is important to its campaign manager members, and should not be traded for a strict learning format. Support, emotional connection, and sense of community can aid learning as it helps reduce feelings of isolation common among students in all types of settings. Here, Sherry and Meyers (1998:15) describe the importance of social support in another computer-mediated environment:

If we had limited our communication strictly to administrative communications such as keeping individual members on task, or to informative communications such as posing and answering questions and conveying factual information, without adding supportive communications such as complimenting individuals on a job well done or acknowledging their stress level and helping them through a difficult situation, it is unlikely that our team's energies would have been sustained as long as they were.

The findings from this research seem to show that campaign managers feel comfortable about being on the Club. Most of the social interaction that occurs on the Club frequently has nothing to do with assignments, projects, or even conservation. Its members quite often use the Club as a way to emotionally connect with others, through happy birthday messages, idle chit-chat, expressions of encouragement, appreciation, friendship, and even love. In order for the campaign managers to engage in real, meaningful dialogue, they need to feel safe to say what they really think:

Providing opportunities for extended student dialogue involves assuring that all voices are heard and respected, and that students feel safe in voicing opinions that may not be 'correct' from a traditional standpoint (Boethel and Dimock 1999:15).

Learning is developmental, in that we make sense of our world by assimilating, accommodating, or rejecting new information. The introduction of others' perspectives is paramount in a successful constructivist learning environment in that "Whatever the nature of the experience, an opportunity for learning takes place when we encounter something that appears inconsistent with our existing understandings" (Boethel and Dimock 1999:7).

Social interaction encourages sharing (of ideas, information, advice, etc.), and Club members noted that sharing is an important benefit they receive from the Club, in that it helps campaign managers "learn from others." The sharing that occurs between campaign managers, Rare/CI staff, and the university lecturers, as well as shared files, photos, links, etc. introduces multiple perspectives on the club. Tinzmann et al. (1990:1) note, "It is primarily *through* dialogue and examining different perspectives that students become knowledgeable, strategic, self-determined, and empathetic." The Club is by nature a public space, designed for exchanges between people. "Learning becomes a

public and highly visible activity when using technology. It can support students as they build shared meaning through a collective transformation of their learning experiences” (Boethel and Dimock 1999:24)

A culture of positivity and resistance to change

Several Club members also noted that there is a “culture of positivity” that is a part of the Pride program—an expectation that everything should be expressed in a positive light, which may limit the kinds of information that are shared on the Club. A culture of positivity makes it difficult for campaign managers to share the difficulties they face, which affects other parts of the learning process. First, it keeps Rare staff and lecturers from understanding the campaign managers’ prior knowledge and beliefs, which affects how the students are able to assimilate new information when it is introduced. In addition, a second challenge to successful learning is resistance to change, which occurs once learners no longer feel a need to examine, or doubt, their beliefs and understandings (Boethel and Dimock 1999:15).

If students are attempting to satisfy a teacher (or in this case the university lecturers and Rare as an employer), they may be more likely to hold on to preconceived beliefs, because they don’t allow themselves to make mistakes. Campaign managers did not report this problem in the survey, but again, if they are unwilling to criticize Rare and the Pride program, perhaps this data is not completely reliable—it is difficult to know. A truly successful learning environment is one where students can learn from their own and others’ positive experiences, as well as their mistakes. If Rare wants to encourage real, honest dialogue on the Club, campaign managers need to feel comfortable making mistakes in a very public arena—a potentially challenging task.

In-depth exploration of ideas

Rare Pride campaign managers require expertise in many different areas in order to successfully complete their campaigns, and they must be knowledgeable about subjects ranging widely from population ecology to social marketing to conservation law. The topics discussed on the Club reflect this variety. A constructivist environment requires focusing learning on a few “big ideas” instead of superficial coverage of many smaller concepts because this “allows for the kinds of extended exploration, testing, and reflection that support meaningful knowledge construction” (Boethel and Dimock 1999:12). Instead of attempting to discuss many topics superficially, Rare might consider introducing dialogue on just a few of the most important concepts related to their conservation education work, in order for campaign managers to achieve the maximum benefit from those discussions.

Learning as a reflective process

The act of reflection, or putting careful thought into past actions, events, and decisions, is an important part of a constructivist learning environment, as described here by Boethel and Dimock (1999:21):

To encourage the construction of knowledge, teachers should provide opportunities for reflection. Conscious reflection upon what is being learned, how it relates to what is already known, and how learning occurs helps learners question personal perceptions of reality and facilitates the analysis and acceptance of the perceived realities of others.

In this study’s results, campaign managers did agree that the Club allows them to reflect on their own Pride campaign experiences to some extent. Indeed, computer-mediated environments can provide ideal space for reflection, as noted by Boethel and

Dimock (1999:17): “Technology as a tool can serve as a means to seek and process information, and to reflect on one’s understandings, beliefs, and thinking processes.” However, staff, lecturers, and campaign managers also noted that the campaign managers are extremely busy during their campaigns and have little time to keep current with the Club, much less spend time reflecting on past events. In order to create a successful learning environment—one that enables instead of distorts learning—the campaign managers need time and opportunity to reflect on their own experiences. Because campaign managers who are currently involved in their campaigns have little time to spare, Rare might instead consider finding additional ways to encourage reflection by campaign managers who have already completed their campaigns, and who potentially have more time for looking back on what they accomplished. It is of course also possible that campaign managers are reflecting on their experiences through their assignments, or in other ways outside the Club.

The job of the educator

The job of the educator “is not to dispense knowledge but to provide students with opportunities and incentives to build it up” (Von Glasersfeld 1996:3). Constructivist learning environments require that teachers act less as information providers and more as guides and facilitators. When teachers let go of this traditional role, it allows students to begin to act as peer tutors, which aids them in knowledge construction.

There is no real moderator on the Club, and no one is “dispensing knowledge” as their primary role on the Club, which does seem to allow room for peer-to-peer learning, as campaign managers ask for and receive advice from each other, as well as from Rare staff and lecturers. At the same time, it is also no one’s job to facilitate learning on the

Club. No one is responsible for understanding campaign managers prior beliefs; no one is asking real, purposeful probing questions or posing problems on the Club for campaign managers to learn from; and certainly no one is introducing the learning objectives outlined in Rare's university validation document. As noted earlier in this document, Rare staff and university lecturers are all very busy people, and the lecturers in particular reported that without compensation, they would not take on a larger role on the Club. If it is no one's job to pay attention to learning on the Club, most likely it will not happen.

The challenges of creating a constructivist learning environment

Rare faces a number of challenges in creating a constructivist learning environment on the Pride Internet Club. Some of these are listed earlier in the findings section of this document, such as technical issues, human error, lack of participation, culture of positivity, unclear instructions and training on how to use the Club, and lack of time, among others. An additional challenge may be the fact that constructivism encourages a new, different way of thinking about learning, and one which is not necessarily accepted by all learners and teachers. Schifter (1996:494) describes traditional beliefs about learning that continue to govern most learning environments:

That people acquire concepts by receiving information from other people who know more; that, if students listen to what their teachers say, they will learn what their teachers know; and that the presence of other students is incidental to learning.

It may also be difficult for Rare to both honor the learning desires of its campaign managers, who may tend to focus their interests on practical matters, and promote learning about higher level conservation topics that are required by university curriculum

and important for long-term successful conservation work. This is a common critique of constructivist learning theory, according to Boethel and Dimock (1999:12):

Perhaps the most difficult task in organizing constructivist learning environments...is reaching a useful accommodation between supporting students in reaching their own understandings and steering them toward an accepted body of knowledge, i.e., the required curriculum.

Rare certainly has its own interests, separate from encouraging campaign manager learning. In the end, Rare is aiming to achieve conservation successes through the use of specific tools and methods for changing behavior. The organization has its own ideas about how campaigns should be run, and these objectives must be achieved in connection with helping student campaign managers learn in order to accomplish maximum conservation impact now and in the future.

Suggestions for future research

This thesis was limited in scope, and there is room for much further research into the connections between CMC and learning, within a conservation context. In particular, additional research on the Rare Pride Spanish Club or other upcoming clubs in Indonesian and Chinese would provide further insight into learning within this specific kind of computer-mediated environment. Taking into account this research on the Pride Internet Club, Rare might consider further studies on learning within other parts of the Pride program, and even other Rare programs, such as Rare Radio. Of course, broader research into how different kinds of technologies can facilitate learning within conservation education or other types of organizations would benefit both academia and groups working on the ground to affect change.

Implications

Paul Butler: “I can’t believe it [the Club] is unique, but if it’s unusual, that in itself offers a learning experience to others, to replicate it, build one.”

Most educators still view learning as a top-down process, wherein one person (the teacher) holds the knowledge. That person’s job is to impart information, in a sense filling students’ empty head vessels with new understandings. If the objective is to increase students’ abilities to memorize and succeed in test situations, then this system seems to work well. If, on the other hand, we want to help students develop or construct knowledge that is relevant to their lives and goals, educators might turn to organizations like Rare, which trains conservation professionals to act as change agents in their home countries.

Computer-mediated environments are uniquely suited to enhance learning in informal and non-formal education settings, particularly those in which face-to-face learning is impossible. Yet many organizations never consider using these kinds of technologies, or they use them simply as communication tools, with little thought as to their potential to facilitate the construction of knowledge. A simple chat room can increase communication, connection, and learning. It can decrease isolation, and create a supportive space for the exchange of ideas, information, and advice. Other conservation organizations might look to the Rare Pride Internet Club as an example for what can be accomplished at low or no cost with a few basic tools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are culled from research findings listed throughout this thesis, and are meant as suggestions to help Rare improve on its existing English language Club. It is my hope that any changes be discussed between Rare staff, university lecturers, conservation partners, and campaign manager members of the Club in order to achieve maximum success.

1. With input from all Club members (including Rare staff, university lecturers, conservation partners, and campaign managers), create clear, formal goals for the Club and establish whether or not learning is a primary goal. [It is my recommendation, of course, that Rare make learning a high priority on the Club, as I believe it will add value to the Club now and in years to come.] Define clearly what the organization wants campaign managers and others to be learning through the Club: are the learning objectives outlined in the university validation document still the most important objectives for learning on the Club, or are other learning objectives more relevant?

If Rare establishes learning as a primary goal of the Club, the following are recommendations for how the Club might be changed or improved to support a successful constructivist learning environment:

2. Organize postings, files, links, photos, etc. that are currently on the Club into learning topics, so that they can be easily searched. This may be difficult with the current Club format, but it is important.
3. Assign one or more people the task of facilitating and guiding learning on the Club. Pay someone to do this if necessary, as without this role assigned, it will likely not happen. The learning facilitator should ask questions and pose problems for discussion on the Club, as well as introduce new information and ideas when appropriate. Focus on big ideas and in-depth discussions to avoid superficial learning.
4. Provide clear, consistent instruction on the purpose of the Club, the services it offers, and any technical information that members might need in order to have a successful experience on the Club.
5. Continue to restrict membership. Post a comprehensive list of members, their connections to Rare, and their current occupations so that membership is more transparent.

6. Find ways to encourage current and past campaign managers to reflect on their experiences on the Club, perhaps giving this assignment to one Club member per month, or providing fun incentives to those who choose to share, in order to encourage reflection and the exchange of experiences and advice.
7. Continue to encourage social interaction on the Club, as it is necessary to create a safe space for learning. Introducing learning topics (as suggested above) may encourage new types of dialogue and in turn reduce seemingly irrelevant messages,
8. Emphasize to campaign managers that sharing challenges and problems (not just successes) is an important part of learning. Rare must create a safe space for campaign managers to express themselves in this way on the Club, as not all people (and not all cultures) are comfortable sharing negative experiences. Rare staff should model this behavior in order to counter Rare's "culture of positivity." Rare could also ask past campaign managers to share a difficulty they experienced during their campaigns, or invite all members to discuss a particular identified challenge so that they do not feel intimidated by doing this alone. Alternatively, Rare staff could interview campaign managers (or they could interview each other during post-campaign wrap-up) and post anonymous "vignettes" centered around a particular challenge faced during each campaign.
9. Continue to work on solving technical problems, such as Internet access, trouble email accounts (Hotmail and Yahoo!, for example), etc.
10. Consider other technologies that are more geared toward learning than a simple Internet club. Although the cost of the current Club (which is free) might be seen as a benefit, other more expensive services that allow for easy organizing, interactivity, and sharing, could bring added value to the Pride program, outweighing any extra cost.

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APPENDIX A

PRIDE CAMPAIGN METHODOLOGY

Behind every step is a measurable conservation objective.

I. After completing 12 weeks of training at a Pride university training center, the campaign begins developing a comprehensive project plan. First, a literature review is conducted by the campaign manager to better understand the site and what is taking place there. Special emphasis is made on understanding who the key players are and what activities are taking place. One of the products of this process is a stakeholder matrix, which identifies key players and their interest in the site.

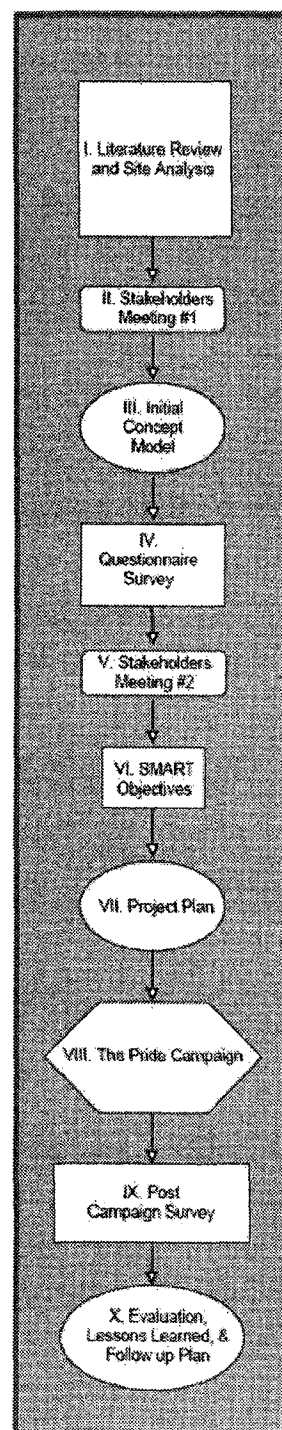
II. This matrix is used to identify and invite groups and individuals to a “stakeholder meeting” during which participants work together (facilitated by the campaign manager) to develop an Initial Concept Model of key threats.

III. The concept model identifies the key direct, indirect, and contributing factors (or root causes) of the threats influencing the target site.

IV. Pride campaign managers then survey between 1 and 3% of the population of the target site to gather information on people’s knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. The questionnaire validates the key threats identified by stakeholders in the concept model, and helps to rank these threats through a random sample of individuals living in and adjacent to the target area. Control group data is also gathered.

V. Once the questionnaire survey data is analyzed, the concept model is revised in a second stakeholders meeting. Stakeholders assist the campaign manager in identifying campaign objectives that focus on knowledge and awareness changes likely to influence key threats.

VI. A good objective is one that is SMART: Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-bound. These SMART objectives are linked to a monitoring plan with clear indicators. Campaign managers design activities and a plan for accomplishing each. Objectives are reviewed by Rare staff and local participants at the second stakeholder meeting.



VII. These objectives are incorporated into a Project Plan that becomes the foundation guiding the campaign.

VIII. Once the Project Plan is approved, a year-long Pride campaign is implemented. A suite of activities (such as school visits, costumes, puppet theatres, billboards, religious sermons, popular songs and music videos) are conducted. Throughout the campaign, the campaign managers communicate with Rare, course lecturers and each other through an online student club and are visited twice for additional support. Campaign managers complete long-distance assignments that support the campaign's goals.

IX. The questionnaire survey is conducted again at the end of the campaign, and the results are used to compare pre-and post-campaign changes in knowledge, attitudes and behavior.

X. At the end of the campaign, managers return to the university training center for a two-week session of sharing lessons learned and evaluation, as well as designing a follow up plan.

APPENDIX B

PRIDE INTERNET CLUB SURVEY

Dear Rare Pride Campaign Manager,

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey about Rare Pride's Internet Club:
<http://clubs.wanadoo.co.uk/groups/rarecenter>.

All information gathered from this survey will be kept strictly confidential--your name and any identifying information about you will not be used in written reports or presentations. Your perspective as a Campaign Manager is very important; please be as open and honest as possible in your answers.

If you have questions, please email me at ashleyparkinson@yahoo.com. Thank you!

1. Which Pride cohort do you belong to?

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kent 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Kent 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kent 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Guadalajara 1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kent 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Guadalajara 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kent 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____ |

2. In what country is/was your Pride campaign conducted?

- ☐ Belize
- ☐ China
- ☐ Costa Rica
- ☐ Federated States of Micronesia
- ☐ Fiji
- ☐ Gabon
- ☐ Grenada
- ☐ Indonesia
- ☐ Laos
- ☐ Mexico
- ☐ Papua New Guinea
- ☐ The Philippines
- ☐ Republic of Palau
- ☐ Sierra Leone
- ☐ South Africa
- ☐ Thailand
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Please remember that survey questions are asking about your experiences with the Rare Pride Internet Club ONLY (not other parts of the Pride program), unless otherwise noted.

3. Overall, how important is the Pride Internet Club to you?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Somewhat important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not very important
- ☐ Not at all important

4. During your Pride Campaign, do/did you use the Pride Internet Club for the following purposes? (If you do not know the answer to a question, please check "Don't Know.")

| | Yes | No | Don't Know |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| To send messages | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To receive messages | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To view archived messages | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To post or view photos | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To view other Club members' contact information | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To view the calendar | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To post or view files | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To vote on an issue | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To post or view links | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. During your Pride Campaign, do/did you use the Pride Internet Club for any other purposes? If yes, please describe.

6. In what ways (if any) have you benefited PROFESSIONALLY from the Pride Internet Club? (Please write "None" if the answer is none.)

7. In what ways (if any) have you benefited PERSONALLY from the Pride Internet Club? (Please write "None" if the answer is none.)

8. Have you had any problems or difficulties with the Club? If so, please describe in detail. If not, write "None."

9. Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements using a scale of 1 - 5 (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree). If you do not know the answer to a question, please check "Don't Know."

| | 1 strongly agree | 2 agree | 3 neutral | 4 disagree | 5 strongly disagree | Don't Know |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| I received enough training on how to use the Club. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club helps me to communicate with Pride staff, lecturers, and other Campaign Managers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I worry that I am missing important information if I am not able to access the Club frequently. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club helps me to think about and process my experiences as a Campaign Manager. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I feel intimidated about posting messages on the Club. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club helps us (Campaign Managers) to support each other during our Pride Campaigns. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club helps me to manage information (files, photos, etc.). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club allows me to share ideas, experiences, and information with other Campaign Managers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I worry that things I post on the Club may negatively impact my grades. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club helps me to complete my assignments. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club helps me to build friendships with other Campaign Managers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| The Club helps me to remember other members' birthdays. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I do not have enough time to use the Club. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club helps me to feel like I am part of the Rare family. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I experience technical problems with the Club (long download time, etc.). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club helps me to feel less isolated. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I feel like the Club belongs to the Campaign Managers, and we can make what we want out of it. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Club helps Pride to fulfill its long-term strategy and mission. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. Has the Pride Internet Club helped you learn the following skills? Check N/A (not applicable) if a question does not apply to you.

| | Yes | No | N/A |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Using the internet and library resources to conduct quality research. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Using computers to communicate (word processing, email, etc.). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Communicating information to different audiences. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Opinion measurement and evaluation (surveys, focus groups, etc.). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Public speaking. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Media outreach (working with journalists, the importance of media, developing press releases, etc.). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Integrating conservation into local school curriculum (lesson plans, teacher training, etc.). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11. If you answered "Yes" to any part of Question 10 above, please give specific examples of which skills the Pride Internet Club has helped you learn, and how it did so.

- 12. Has the Pride Internet Club helped you learn about the following topics? Check N/A (not applicable) if a question does not apply to you.**

| | Yes | No | N/A |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| The principles and concepts of biodiversity. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Approaches to changing people's attitudes and behaviors. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The history and principles of environmental education. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The principles and concepts related to habitat and population ecology. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| National and international laws and conventions affecting wildlife, habitat, and resource conservation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 13. If you answered "Yes" to any part of Question 12 above, please give specific examples of which topics the Pride Internet Club has helped you learn, and how it did so.**

- 14. Has the Pride Internet Club helped you with the following projects? Check N/A (not applicable) if a question does not apply to you.**

| | Yes | No | N/A |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Choosing an appropriate flagship species for a Pride Campaign. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Designing an appropriate environmental education strategy for a Pride Campaign. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Conducting research and writing a scientific paper about a flagship species. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Creating a brochure or critical summary of conservation legislation in a specific country. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Designing and implementing a field-based, social marketing campaign. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Producing effective marketing materials for an outreach campaign (badges, stickers, sermons, etc.). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 15. If you answered "Yes" to any part of Question 14 above, please give specific examples of which projects the Pride Internet Club has helped you with, and how it did so.**

- 16. The Pride program offers different kinds of support for Campaign Managers before, during, and after your Pride Campaigns. Rank the following types of support in order of how important they are to you, from 1-6 (1=more important, 6=less important). Please mark each number only once.**

| | Pre-campaign university training | Pride manual | Site visits | Pride Internet Club | Phone/email/instant messaging | Post-campaign university wrap-up | Don't Know |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 (more important) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 (less important) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 17. Please indicate how often you use methods other than the Club to communicate with Pride Campaign Managers, staff, and lecturers.**

| | Once or more per day | A few times per week | A few times per month | Less than once per month | Never |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Telephone | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Email | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| MSN (or other instant messenger) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Skype | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 18. What suggestions (if any) do you have for improving the Club? (Please write "None" if the answer is none.)**

19. Are there additional comments about the Club that you would like to share? (Please write "None" if the answer is none.)

20. Please list your native language/s.

21. Please list other languages in which you are fluent in the following areas. (Please write "None" if the answer is none.)

Reading _____

Writing _____

Speaking _____

Oral comprehension _____

22. What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Female

23. How old are you? _____

24. What is the highest level of education that you have achieved?

☐ High school diploma

☐ Two-year college degree

☐ Four-year college or university degree

☐ Master's degree

☐ PhD

☐ None of the above

☐ Other (please specify)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. When I have finished my research, I will send you a copy of the final report. If you have any questions or concerns before that time, please contact me at ashleyparkinson@yahoo.com.

APPENDIX C

Table A1. Campaign manager level of agreement with Club benefits and challenges

| Level of agreement on a scale of 1 - 5 (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree, and DK = "Don't Know") | 1 (strongly agree) | 2 (agree) | 3 (neutral) | 4 (disagree) | 5 (strongly disagree) | Don't Know | Percentage of campaign managers who agree or strongly agree |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|---|
| The Club helps me to communicate with Pride staff lecturers and other Campaign Managers. | 9 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 82% |
| The Club helps me to build friendships with other Campaign Managers. | 11 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 88% |
| The Club helps us (Campaign Managers) to support each other during our Pride Campaigns. | 11 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 82% |
| The Club helps me to manage information (files photos etc.). | 6 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 47% |
| The Club allows me to share ideas experiences and information with other Campaign Managers. | 10 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 82% |

| Level of agreement on a scale of 1 - 5 (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree, and DK = "Don't Know") | 1 (strongly agree) | 2 (agree) | 3 (neutral) | 4 (disagree) | 5 (strongly disagree) | Don't Know | Percentage of campaign managers who agree or strongly agree |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|---|
| The Club helps me to remember other members' birthdays. | 13 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 94% |
| The Club helps me to complete my assignments. | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 41% |
| I feel intimidated about posting messages on the Club. | 1 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 12% |
| I worry that things I post on the Club may negatively impact my grades. | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 0% |
| I do not have enough time to use the Club. | 3 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 59% |
| I experience technical problems with the Club (long download time etc.). | 7 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 65% |

| Level of agreement on a scale of 1 - 5 (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree, and DK = "Don't Know") | 1 (strongly agree) | 2 (agree) | 3 (neutral) | 4 (disagree) | 5 (strongly disagree) | Don't Know | Percentage of campaign managers who agree or strongly agree |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------|---|
| The Club helps me to feel like I am part of the Rare family. | 12 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 94% |
| The Club helps me to feel less isolated. | 8 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 76% |
| I feel like the Club belongs to the Campaign Managers and we can make what we want out of it. | 4 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 41% |
| The Club helps Pride to fulfill its long-term strategy and mission. | 7 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 71% |
| I received enough training on how to use the Club. | 5 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 76% |
| I worry that I am missing important information if I am not able to access the Club frequently. | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 47% |
| The Club helps me to think about and process my experiences as a Campaign Manager. | 9 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 65% |

APPENDIX D

Table A2. Campaign manager survey results (tabulated by SurveyMonkey.com)

| Which Pride cohort do you belong to? | |
|---|-------------------|
| | Response Total |
| Kent 1 | 3 |
| Kent 2 | 1 |
| Kent 3 | 8 |
| Kent 4 | 4 |
| Kent 5 | 3 |
| Guadalajara 1 | 0 |
| Guadalajara 2 | 0 |
| Other (please specify) | 0 |
| Total Respondents | 19 |
| (skipped this question) | 0 |
| In what country is/was your Pride campaign conducted? | |
| | Response Total |
| Belize | 0 |
| China | 2 |
| Costa Rica | 0 |
| Federated States of Micronesia | 1 |
| Fiji | 1 |
| Gabon | 1 |
| Grenada | 0 |
| Indonesia | 5 |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Laos | 1 |
| Mexico | 0 |
| Papua New Guinea | 1 |
| The Philippines | 1 |
| Republic of Palau | 1 |
| Sierra Leone | 1 |
| South Africa | 4 |
| Thailand | 0 |
| Other (please specify) | 0 |

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 19 |
| (skipped this question) | 0 |

**Overall how important is the Pride
Internet Club to you?**

| | Response Total |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Very important | 8 |
| Somewhat important | 5 |
| Neutral | 4 |
| Not very important | 1 |
| Not at all important | 0 |

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 18 |
| (skipped this question) | 1 |

**During your Pride Campaign do/did
you use the Pride Internet Club for the
following purposes? (If you do not
know the answer to a question please
check "Don't Know.")**

| | Yes | No | Don't Know | Response Total |
|--|-----|----|------------|-------------------|
| To send messages | 13 | 4 | 1 | 18 |
| To receive messages | 13 | 4 | 1 | 18 |
| To view archived messages | 11 | 5 | 2 | 18 |
| To post or view photos | 12 | 5 | 1 | 18 |
| To view other Club members' contact information | 9 | 8 | 1 | 18 |
| To view the calendar | 8 | 9 | 1 | 18 |
| To post or view files | 10 | 7 | 1 | 18 |
| To post or view links | 9 | 8 | 1 | 18 |
| To vote on an issue | 4 | 13 | 1 | 18 |
| Total Respondents | 18 | | | |
| (skipped this question) | 1 | | | |

**During your Pride Campaign do/did
you use the Pride Internet Club for
any other purposes? If yes please
describe.**

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 11 |
| (skipped this question) | 8 |

In what ways (if any) have you benefited PROFESSIONALLY from the Pride Internet Club? (Please write "None" if the answer is none.)

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 18 |
| (skipped this question) | 1 |

In what ways (if any) have you benefited PERSONALLY from the Pride Internet Club? (Please write "None" if the answer is none.)

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 18 |
| (skipped this question) | 1 |

Have you had any problems or difficulties with the Club? If so please describe in detail. If not write "None."

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 18 |
| (skipped this question) | 1 |

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements using a scale of 1 - 5 (1 = strongly agree 2 = agree 3 = neutral 4 = disagree and 5 = strongly disagree). If you do not know the answer to a question please check "Don't Know."

| | 1 (strongly agree) | 2 (agree) | 3 (neutral) | 4 (disagree) | 5 (strongly disagree) | Don't Know | Response Average |
|---|--------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------|
| The Club helps me to communicate with Pride staff lecturers and other Campaign Managers. | 9 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.65 |
| The Club helps me to build friendships with other Campaign Managers. | 11 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1.59 |
| The Club helps us (Campaign Managers) to support each other during our Pride Campaigns. | 11 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1.65 |
| The Club helps me to manage information (files photos etc.). | 6 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2.56 |
| The Club allows me to share ideas experiences and information with other Campaign Managers. | 10 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1.75 |
| The Club helps me to remember other members' birthdays. | 13 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.29 |
| The Club helps me to complete my assignments. | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 2.88 |
| I feel intimidated about posting messages on the Club. | 1 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 3.65 |
| I worry that things I post on the Club may negatively impact my grades. | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4.13 |
| I do not have enough time to use the Club. | 3 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2.41 |
| I experience technical problems with the Club (long download time etc.). | 7 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2.12 |
| The Club helps me to feel like I am part of the Rare family. | 12 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1.35 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|------|
| The Club helps me to feel less isolated. | 8 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1.88 |
| I feel like the Club belongs to the Campaign Managers and we can make what we want out of it. | 4 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2.44 |
| The Club helps Pride to fulfill its long-term strategy and mission. | 7 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1.73 |
| I received enough training on how to use the Club. | 5 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2.12 |
| I worry that I am missing important information if I am not able to access the Club frequently. | 5 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 2.71 |
| The Club helps me to think about and process my experiences as a Campaign Manager. | 9 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Total Respondents | 17 | | | | | | |
| (skipped this question) | 2 | | | | | | |

Has the Pride Internet Club helped you learn the following skills? Check N/A (not applicable) if a question does not apply to you.

| | Yes | No | N/A | Response Average |
|---|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Using the internet and library resources to conduct quality research. | 6 | 7 | 5 | 1.54 |
| Using computers to communicate (word processing email etc.). | 6 | 5 | 7 | 1.45 |
| Communicating information to different audiences. | 7 | 6 | 5 | 1.46 |
| Opinion measurement and evaluation (surveys focus groups etc.). | 12 | 2 | 4 | 1.14 |
| Public speaking. | 1 | 9 | 8 | 1.9 |
| Media outreach (working with journalists the importance of media developing press releases etc.). | 3 | 6 | 9 | 1.67 |
| Integrating conservation into local school curriculum (lesson plans teacher training etc.). | 10 | 3 | 5 | 1.23 |
| Total Respondents | 18 | | | |
| (skipped this question) | 1 | | | |

If you answered "Yes" to any part of Question 10 above please give specific examples of which skills the Pride Internet Club has helped you learn and how it did so.

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 14 |
| (skipped this question) | 5 |

| Has the Pride Internet Club helped you learn about the following topics? Check N/A (not applicable) if a question does not apply to you. | | | | |
|---|-----|----|-----|---------------------|
| | Yes | No | N/A | Response Average |
| The principles and concepts of biodiversity. | 4 | 10 | 4 | 1.71 |
| Approaches to changing people's attitudes and behaviors. | 7 | 7 | 4 | 1.5 |
| The history and principles of environmental education. | 6 | 8 | 4 | 1.57 |
| The principles and concepts related to habitat and population ecology. | 5 | 9 | 4 | 1.64 |
| National and international laws and conventions affecting wildlife habitat and resource conservation. | 3 | 11 | 4 | 1.79 |
| Total Respondents | 18 | | | |
| (skipped this question) | 1 | | | |
| If you answered "Yes" to any part of Question 12 above please give specific examples of which topics the Pride Internet Club has helped you learn and how it did so. | | | | |
| Total Respondents | 6 | | | |
| (skipped this question) | 13 | | | |

Has the Pride Internet Club helped you with the following projects? Check N/A (not applicable) if a question does not apply to you.

| | Yes | No | N/A | Response Average |
|--|-----|----|-----|------------------|
| Choosing an appropriate flagship species for a Pride Campaign. | 7 | 7 | 4 | 1.5 |
| Designing an appropriate environmental education strategy for a Pride Campaign. | 10 | 4 | 4 | 1.29 |
| Conducting research and writing a scientific paper about a flagship species. | 6 | 8 | 4 | 1.57 |
| Creating a brochure or critical summary of conservation legislation in a specific country. | 6 | 8 | 4 | 1.57 |
| Designing and implementing a field-based social marketing campaign. | 9 | 3 | 6 | 1.25 |
| Producing effective marketing materials for an outreach campaign (badges stickers sermons etc.). | 9 | 3 | 6 | 1.25 |
| Total Respondents | 18 | | | |
| (skipped this question) | 1 | | | |

If you answered "Yes" to any part of Question 14 above please give specific examples of which projects the Pride Internet Club has helped you with and how it did so.

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 10 |
| (skipped this question) | 9 |

The Pride program offers different kinds of support for Campaign Managers before during and after your Pride Campaigns. Please rank the following types of support in order of how important they are to you (1=more important 6=less important).

| | Pre-campaign university training | Pride manual | Site visits | Pride Internet Club | Phone/email/i nstant messaging | Post- campaign university wrap-up | Don't Know | Response Average |
|-------------------------|--|--------------|-------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|------------|---------------------|
| 1 (more important) | 13 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1.56 |
| 2 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2.5 |
| 3 | 2 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 3.67 |
| 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 4.78 |
| 5 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 4.29 |
| 6 (less important) | 0 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4.25 |
| Total Respondents | 18 | | | | | | | |
| (skipped this question) | 1 | | | | | | | |

Please indicate how often you use methods other than the Club to communicate with Pride Campaign Managers staff and lecturers.

| | Once or more per day | A few times per week | A few times per month | Less than once per month | Never | Response Average |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|---------------------|
| Telephone | 1 | 1 | 1 | 11 | 4 | 3.89 |
| Email | 4 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 2.39 |
| MSN (or other instant messenger) | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3.11 |
| Skype | 0 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 10 | 4 |
| Total Respondents | 18 | | | | | |
| (skipped this question) | 1 | | | | | |

What suggestions (if any) do you have for improving the Club? (Please write "None" if the answer is none.)

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 15 |
| (skipped this question) | 4 |

Are there additional comments about the Club that you would like to share? (Please write "None" if the answer is none.)

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 15 |
| (skipped this question) | 4 |

Please list your native language/s.

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 15 |
| (skipped this question) | 4 |

**Please list other languages in which
you are fluent in the following areas.
(Please write "None" if the answer is
none.)**

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| | Response |
| | Total |
| Reading | 15 |
| Writing | 15 |
| Speaking | 15 |
| Oral comprehension | 15 |
| Total Respondents | 15 |
| (skipped this question) | 4 |

What is your gender?

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| | Response |
| | Total |
| Male | 8 |
| Female | 7 |
| Total Respondents | 15 |
| (skipped this question) | 4 |

How old are you?

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total Respondents | 15 |
| (skipped this question) | 4 |

**What is the highest level of education
that you have achieved?**

| | Response Total |
|--|-------------------|
| High school diploma | 1 |
| Two-year college degree | 0 |
| Four-year college or university degree | 10 |
| Master's degree | 2 |
| PhD | 0 |
| None of the above | 0 |
| Other (please specify) | 2 |
| Total Respondents | 15 |
| (skipped this question) | 4 |
